AN ESSAY

upon the PRESENT STATE of the

THEATRE

IN

France, England and Italy.

With REFLECTIONS upon

Dramatic Poetry in General,

AND

The Characters of the Principal Authors and Performers of thoſe Nations.

A Work abſolutely neceſſary to be read by every Lover of Theatrical Exhibitions.

The Stage, if under proper Regulations, would be a Source of the higheſt and moſt rational Amuſement.

ADDISON.

Inſpicere exemplum vitæ morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem et veras hinc ducere voces. HORACE.

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THE CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.

CHAP.

CONTENTS.

AN

THE

FRENCH, ENGLISH, and ITALIAN

THEATRES

COMPARED, &c.

CHAP. I.

Some preliminary Obſervations.

THE human mind is chiefly delighted with ſhew and intrigue; the exhibition of elegance lifts it into a pleaſing enthuſiaſm, while a variety of incident enlivens thoſe ſcenes which by ſameneſs might otherwiſe diſguſt: ſpectacle and action therefore are the primary

7+

ſources of pleaſure in all theatrical entertainments. And here it is worthy of remark, that as long as it is kept within the bounds of what it can do without any extraordinary exertion of it's powers, the more actions required of it, the higher is it's pleaſure; it's activity is confined within certain limits, beyond which it is extremely indolent. Add to this, that the mind loves to change it's object and action; ſo that we muſt at once excite it's curioſity, indulge it's indolence, and gratify it's inconſtancy. Whatever is important, new, extraordinary in it's kind, and of a doubtful iſſue, piques the curioſity of the mind. That which has unity and ſimplicity ſuits its indolence; and that which is diverſified pleaſes its inconſtancy; whence 'tis natural to conclude, that all theſe qualities ſhould be united in the object which is preſented to it, in order to render its pleaſure compleat.

The importance of the action of a tragedy ariſes from the dignity of the perſons and the greatneſs of their intereſts. How-

ever,

ever, when the actions are of ſuch a nature, that without loſing any of their beauty they might paſs amongſt perſons of a lower ſphere, the names of princes and kings are uſed only to give an air of grandeur to the ſubject: but this embelliſhment, though not amiſs, does not appear by any means neceſſary; it is a law that appears to have been eſtabliſhed by the tyrant cuſtom, not dictated by the unerring voice of right reaſon.

Mr. Row, in his excellent tragedy, entitled, The Fair Penitent, has ſhewn, that the diſtreſſes of private life, are at leaſt as well calculated for the ſcene, as the fate of kings and empires; nay, the former ſeem to have the advantage as they come more home to the boſoms of the ſpectators; who, as it is expreſſed in the Prologue to the above-mentioned piece,

Learn to pity woes ſo like their own.

Could we but diveſt ourſelves of vulgar prejudices, and ſeriouſly attend to this

maxim, the truth of which will be conteſted by few, *viz.* That all fellow-feeling has its ſource in ſelf-feeling, we might even be induced to approve the boldneſs of a modern author, who has ventured to introduce low-life into tragedy.

Though in the tragedy of the London Prentice all the characters are taken from low-life, there is a diſtreſs in the piece, which renders it much more affecting than many plays which repreſent events that are thought of much higher importance; and in which the fate of kings and kingdoms is at the point of being decided by a ſingle battle.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the circumſtances that render Plays intereſting.

THE intereſting circumſtances of Plays may be reduced to the following heads, *viz.* The Danger of loſing Life, Honour or Liberty, a Throne, a Friend, or a Miſtreſs.

It has often been made a queſtion, Whether the death of one of the perſonages is a neceſſary circumſtance in a tragedy? Death is indeed an important event; but it is often more ſubſervient to bring about the cataſtrophe, than conducive to inhance the importance of the action: the hazard of life and the imminent danger of death often contribute little to render the plot more intereſting. What is it that makes Cato in Mr. Addiſon's excellent tragedy an object ſo worthy the

attention of all intelligent ſpectators? Is it the danger that threatens him from Cæſar, or from Syphax and Sempronius, who conſpire againſt him at Utica? No ſurely; it is the neceſſity he lies under of ſurviving the liberty of his country, by making a diſadvantageous peace with the conqueror, or expoſing his few remaining friends by hazarding an unequal combat. Great intereſts are thoſe which moſt powerfully affect the heart of man; and there are certain moments when life is not his moſt important concern.

The moſt intereſting circumſtances of tragedy may be reduced to two different heads, *viz.* the more elevated, ſuch as the acquiſition or preſervation of a Throne, an indiſpenſable Duty, a Revenge, &c. and thoſe of a more tender and affecting nature, ſuch as Friendſhip or Love. An intereſt of one or other kind takes place in every tragedy, and characterizes that in which it predominates. The Sublime ſhould, no doubt, be preferred to the Tender: and Julius Cæſar, which is altogether

gether great and elevated, is certainly of a higher rank than the Fair Penitent, which is only tender and affecting. But that tragedy muſt ever claim an undiſputed preference, which at once unites the Pathetic and the Sublime. Thus Othello and Venice Preſerved, will always be placed above Romeo and the Orphan. The only method to ſucceed in pieces of this nature, is to repreſent love combated by duty, ambition, or glory; ſo that after having a long time ſtruggled with them, it may at length be overcome after many vehement and reiterated efforts. Theſe actions then become truly great by the importance of the contending paſſions. Such pieces are at once moving by the ſtruggles of affection, and noble and ſublime by the intereſts which it counter-acts. The antient poets have ſcarce given Love any place in their dramatic pieces; and they are applauded by ſome criticks, for not having debaſed their ſtage by ſentiments of a nature ſo trivial and ſo incompatible with the ſublime. Theſe rigid

gentlemen, would by the example of Sophocles, Æſchylus, Euripides and Seneca, exclude love from the tragic ſcene; and in ſupport of their opinion, often cite thoſe lines of Ovid.

Non benè conveniunt nec in unâ ſede morantur
Majeſtas & Amor. METAM.

For my part, I am inclined to think, that the Antients were as little aware of the effects which love is capable of producing in tragedy as their partizans amongſt the Moderns. I can by no means think, that authors would ſhew their judgment in rejecting ſuch ſubjects as thoſe of the Orphan, Jane Shore, and All for Love. This paſſion never produces a happier effect than when it is placed in contraſt with ſome paſſion of a nobler kind; which, after having a long time ſtruggled with it to no purpoſe, is at length ſubdued. It is owing to the practice of this ſecret, that love affects us ſo powerfully in Venice Preſerved, All for

Love,

Love, and Theodoſius. The New and Extraordinary may find a place both in the events of the piece and the characters. But we ſhall take occaſion to ſpeak of theſe particulars elſewhere. Here we ſhall ſpeak of the new and extraordinary only as far as they relate to the paſſions. Truth alone is not capable of engaging the attention of the mind; truth of an extraordinary and uncommon nature is required for this purpoſe. Every body is in ſome meaſure knowing in the paſſions of men; but beyond the ſmall extent of their knowledge it is an unknown country to moſt people, but a country in which all are deſirous of making new diſcoveries. The paſſions have many nice and delicate effects, which happen but rarely, and which, when they do happen, ſcarce ever fall under the obſervation of penetrating judges. It muſt be owned, that their being carried to exceſs is ſufficient to make them new to us; in nature, we generally ſee them confined within narrow limits. Where do we meet with men

perfectly amorous, ambitious or covetous? Mediocrity is so natural to human nature, that there have been but few heroes even in villainy. Let us suppose a lover dissatisfied with his mistress, carry his anger so far, as to declare, that he does not lose much in losing her; and, that she is by no means, a first-rate beauty: this certainly is expressing resentment in terms sufficiently strong. Let us then suppose, a friend to whom this lover addresses his discourse agree, that she has in effect but little beauty; that her eyes, for example, are too little. To this let the lover make answer, that her eyes should by no means be found fault with; that they are the most sprightly and agreeable in the world: let his friend then criticize her mouth, and the lover defend it with equal warmth: let her complexion, her shape, &c. be attacked and defended in like manner. This is certainly a new, uncommon, and delicate effect of passion, and highly entertaining.

This example, though of the comic nature, and taken from the Bourgeois Gentilhomme of Moliere, appeared ſo appoſite to the preſent ſubject, that I could not help giving it the preference to others much more ſerious and elevated. It muſt be acknowledged, that many of the French Romances abound in ſtrokes of this nature; and, that the moſt ſeemingly ſuperficial authors of that nation diſcover a profound knowledge of the human heart.

CHAP. III.

Of the ſource whence theſe effects of Paſſion proceed.

THAT which renders theſe effects of Paſſion exquiſite, delicate and entertaining, conſiſts frequently in a ſort of contradiction which diſcovers itſelf in them. It is thus, that men hurried away by paſſion, do the reverſe of what they intend; ſay, what they did not mean to ſay; ſtill feel the influence of an inclination which they think they have ſubdued; or diſcover what they make the utmoſt efforts to conceal. Love furniſhes the moſt of theſe occurrences; or rather, love is the only paſſion fruitful in ſuch affecting incidents and ſuch awakening ſituations. The obligation which women lie under of ſurmounting or concealing this paſſion, and their delicacy of ſentiment, which makes them conceal it even from themſelves,

ſelves, are never-failing ſources of theſe pleaſing contradictions. Men are rarely placed in the ſame circumſtances with women in this reſpect; and it is for this reaſon, that love affects us leſs in men's characters. Leonora, in the Spaniſh Friar, or the Double Diſcovery, is ſeized with a paſſion for Torriſmond unknown to herſelf; and the ſtruggles between paſſion and dignity were never better repreſented than in this character: the affecting account which ſhe gives of the firſt riſe of her inclination is ſo well known, that it would be ſuperfluous to cite it here. We have but few ſuch inſtances of the fineſſe of this paſſion in a man's character: the only inſtance of this nature that occurs to me, is that of Pyrrhus in the Diſtreſſed Mother, if that piece ſhould not be rather looked upon as the property of the French ſtage, as it is almoſt a literal tranſlation from the Andromache of M. Racine. Pyrrhus having in a tranſport of anger formed a reſolution to marry Hermione, in order to revenge himſelf

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on the ſcornful Andromache, aſks his confident Phœnix, Whether he does not think, that ſhe will be jealous if he marries her rival? dwells upon her name, and at laſt ſays, That he has not ſufficiently revenged himſelf, and that he muſt go and reproach her once more with all her baſeneſs; there cannot be a more natural repreſentation of the ſtrange agitations of mind to which thoſe under the dominion of this capricious paſſion are ſubject, than that we meet with in the above ſcene. It is ſaid, however, that M. Boileau, the critick and friend of Racine, adviſed him to ſuppreſs it, as containing ſomething of too familiar and comic a nature for the dignity of the tragic ſcene. Certain it is, that one cannot ſee it repreſented without calling to mind thoſe lines of the antient comic poet:

Hæc ſi
Incerto & cæco fluetantia ſorte labores
Reddere certa tibi, nihilo plus agas quam ſi
Des Operam ut cum ratione inſanias.

TERENCE's Eunuch.

Ambition

Ambition and revenge have not of themſelves this contraſt of effects; and thoſe who are formed by nature to feel the influence of theſe paſſions in a lively manner, yield to them generally without any ſtruggle, and without even endeavouring to conceal them from themſelves. Thoſe whoſe aim is to riſe to a more elevated ſtation, or to revenge an injury, are ſeldom ſcrupulous concerning the means by which they may bring about their ends; but lovers are extremely nice, with regard to the means of attaining to the poſſeſſion of the object of their love. The hope of being beloved, and the fear of not being ſo, generally depend upon a look, a ſigh, a word: they depend, in fine, upon things almoſt imperceptible, and of a doubtful interpretation; whereas, the hopes and fears which accompany ambition, or the deſire of revenge, are more ſtrongly marked, more determinate; and, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, Of a more palpable nature, and more apt to ſtrike every vulgar obſerver. Even thoſe who

who are beloved, may queſtion whether they are ſo or not; or, may dread every moment, that they are ſo no longer; or lament, that they are not beloved as much as they could wiſh: but, when a man has once revenged himſelf, or attained to the height of his ambition, all is over. In fine, love produces more effects of a ſingular and amuſing nature, becauſe its objects are more refined, more uncertain, and more changeable. I am ſenſible, that the parallel between love and the other paſſions might be carried ſtill farther; and, that love would always come off triumphant: but, I think, I have ſaid enough to prove, that no other paſſion can of itſelf be equally entertaining upon the ſtage. The diſpoſition of the ſpectators contributes ſtill farther to promote this effect. The paſſion of love has undoubtedly more influence amongſt men, than ambition, or the deſire of revenge. The ſingularity, or the extravagance of the effects of a paſſion, is better adapted to pleaſe an audience than its violence alone; becauſe

becauſe it gives occaſion to a more conſiderable diſcovery: it is true, theſe two beauties may be united in the ſame piece, and that an uncommon effect of a paſſion at the ſame time proves its force. From hence it ſeems to follow, that love ſhould produce a greater effect upon the ſtage, than either revenge or ambition; which pleaſe only by their violence, and which are deſtitute of that refinement and delicacy which love alone is poſſeſſed of.

A piece which turns entirely upon love may ſufficiently ſtir the paſſions of an audience; witneſs Romeo and the Orphan. No other paſſion can ſingly command the attention of ſpectators, and exert ſuch an influence over their minds. Of all the emotions of the human mind, love is the moſt fertile in ſentiment, and that which moſt powerfully affects the human heart.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Rules to be obſerved in the drawing of Characters.

THAT which is rare and perfect in its kind, can never fail of engaging the attention: for this reaſon, a poet ſhould always take particular care to heighten the characters of his piece; mediocrity ſhould never appear, either in the repreſentation of virtues or vices. The difficulty of the objects ſurmounted conſtitutes the grandeur of virtue. Lucius Junius Brutus ſacrifices natural affection to the love of his country; and this is ſo extraordinary an effort of virtue, that it certainly requires the full exertion of all the powers of the moſt poetical genius, to treat it in a manner adequate to the ſublimity of the ſubject. Old Horatius, in the Roman Father, reſolves to puniſh his ſon according to the utmoſt rigour of the

the law, for having baſely given way to the three Curiatii: and this is another ſhining example of virtue and patriotiſm. Sigiſmunda, who, notwithſtanding her paſſion for Tancred, ſtill continues faithful to the Conſtable whom ſhe had married againſt her will, affords us as ſtriking an inſtance of attachment to duty. Strokes of this nature, are endued with a power of touching and raiſing the heart of an auditor: and one ſuch ſtroke, is ſufficient to communicate grandeur to a tragedy. Vice has its perfection alſo. A demi-tyrant would be unworthy of the attention of an audience; but ambition, cruelty, and treachery, carried to exceſs, become great and ſtriking objects; hence, Richard, Macbeth, and Iago, derive their power of pleaſing: their execrable and horrid crimes contract ſomething ſublime and elevating, and all the exaggerations of their guilt contribute to raiſe them to a character of heroiſm. Thus Boileau obſerves in his excellent Art of Poetry:

Il ny 'a point de ſerpent, ni de Monſtre odieux
Qui par l'Art imité ne puiſſe plaire aux yieux.

It is ſtill farther requiſite, that tragedy ſhould make objects as beautiful as poſſible. Art has a ſecret to embelliſh vices, and give them an air of grandeur and elevation. Ambition is noble when it aſpires to crowns; cruelty is in ſome meaſure ſo, when ſupported by great inflexibility and reſolution; even treachery itſelf has ſomething noble, when accompanied with great dexterity and art. The characters of Richard, Zanga, and Iago, are not without their beauty: the tragic ſcene may admit of vice, though it rejects low and deſpicable vices. Some Criticks have endeavoured to juſtify authors who have introduced low and contemptible characters upon the ſtage, and, that without uſing any art to palliate their defects; they have conſtantly urged in vindication of ſuch characters, that they are to be met with in nature: it muſt be

allowed

allowed, that their plea is juſt; But does nature afford nothing more perfect or noble in its kind? It undoubtedly does; and certainly, its moſt ſtriking objects ſhould be repreſented upon the ſtage. What would we think of a painter, who ſhould repreſent men ſuch as they generally are, of a middling ſtature, aukward, ill-proportioned, and uncouth? And, yet this, would be to repreſent them exactly according to nature.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the conſtruction of the Fable.

THE grand ſecret for piquing the curioſity of an audience, is to render the event doubtful: for this end, it is requiſite, that the intrigue be of ſuch a nature, as to make it very difficult to foreſee the cataſtrophe: the plot ſhould not be unravelled till the end of the piece, and, if poſſible, not till the laſt ſcene. Moſt of our Engliſh tragic poets have been defective in this particular: at the opening of moſt of their pieces a ſpectator may almoſt gueſs at the concluſion. In Romeo and Juliet, as altered by Mr. Garrick, this rule is obſerved, and this is the only Engliſh tragedy I can recollect, that affords an inſtance of this beauty. When an author has once excited our curioſity, he ſhould not let it languiſh,

languiſh, he ſhould ſtill give hopes of ſatisfying it, and ſtill contrive to amuſe it, and conduct to the period which he firſt propoſed: he ſhould make the ſpectator every moment draw nigh to the concluſion, and ſtill by a ſort of enchantment hide it from him: he ſhould not, if poſſible, know where he is going, but he ſhould perceive himſelf making a conſtant progreſs. The reaſon of this rule is obvious: every body that reflects upon the operations of his mind muſt have obſerved how much expectation contributes to inhance the importance of an event, and to increaſe the palpitations of impatience. Thus in a voyage at ſea when firſt a traveller beholds at a diſtance a tower in the harbour to which he bends his courſe, his heart is rouſed and agitated with joy at approaching the place of his deſtination: he thinks himſelf already on ſhore, and finds a league or two which he has ſtill to go longer and more tedious then his whole paſſage: but the ſhip ſtill draws nearer to the town, and our traveller, who now deſcries

ſcries the ſpires and ſteeples thereof finds his eagerneſs augment with his proximity. This familiar inſtance, the juſtneſs of which will be allowed by every body that has ever made a voyage at ſea, may ſuffice to ſhew, that the above rule is founded in reaſon, and not dictated by caprice.

The plot of a play ſhould be conducted expeditiouſly; a ſcene which is not a ſtep to the concluſion is a defect: all ſhould be action upon a theatre, and the fineſt ſpeeches would be there inſupportable if they had not ſome connection with the intrigue. Our Engliſh tragedies, and thoſe of Shakeſpear in particular, are very defective in this reſpect. In almoſt every tragedy of that great poet, whoſe inaccuracy can be equalled by nothing but his genius, there are ſeveral ſcenes which it has ſince been found neceſſary to retrench in the action. As the ſubjects of moſt tragedies are taken from hiſtory, the title of a piece alone generally lets us into the cataſtrophe; for which reaſon, an

author

author ſhould endeavour to find out incidents of ſuch a nature, that they ſhould not appear to conduct to the known event; and, yet ſhould at laſt lead the reader to it through a winding path ſtruck out by the poet's art.

C CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of unity and ſimplicity in the Drama.

THIS ſeems to be all that the curioſity of the human mind requires in the objects preſented to it; but the mind being limited and indolent, requires, that whatever is offered to its conſideration ſhould have unity and ſimplicity. Hence it appears, that the coalition of two actions would diſtract the attention in a diſagreeable manner; the mind would be under a neceſſity of making a choice, and the action to which it would give the preference, would of conſequence, give it a diſguſt for the other. The ſame inconvenience would ariſe from an action embarraſſed by any thing foreign or unneceſſary, ſo that unity ſeems to be eſſential to the plan of a dramatic piece.

It

It is not eaſy to gueſs what the Antients meant by an Epiſode, nor are the Moderns well agreed concerning the ſignification of the term; luckily this is a circumſtance of but little importance: if by an epiſode is meant ſomething inſerted into the action, and that might be retrenched without doing it any hurt, like the love intrigue in Cato; which, however, is not without its beauties; every epiſode is certainly vicious. If, on the other hand, we are to underſtand by epiſodes, the intereſts of under characters, which conſpire with the principal action, though it does not entirely depend upon them, epiſodes muſt be allowed to be highly expedient and often neceſſary. When I aſſert, that under characters help on the action, I would not be underſtood to mean, that they put a machine in motion which could not eaſily go on without them: I mean, that their aſſiſtance is eſſentially neceſſary; nor ſhould this ſuccour be deferred too long, the ſpectators ſhould not be obliged to wait till the latter end

of the piece to diſcover the uſe of theſe characters; as long as they appear without neceſſity they tire the patience of the auditors. Unity ſhould be joined to ſimplicity. I call that a ſimple action which is eaſily followed, and which does not fatigue the mind by a multiplicity of incidents. I can by no means agree with thoſe, who look upon ſimplicity of itſelf as a perfection. Thoſe who extol the Greek dramatic poets upon this account, ſeem to be excited rather by the enthuſiaſm for antiquity, than influenced by juſt taſte and right reaſon.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of diverſity in dramatic Poems.

SIMPLICITY does not pleaſe of itſelf; its only advantage is, that it contributes to the eaſe of the mind. Diverſity on the other hand, is in itſelf capable of pleaſing, the mind loves to vary its action and object. A ſtory does not pleaſe merely becauſe it is ſimple, nor does its power of pleaſing increaſe in proportion with its ſimplicity; but it pleaſes by being diverſified without ceaſing to be ſimple: the more a fable is diverſified, whilſt it ſtill continues to be ſimple, the more muſt it pleaſe. In effect of two dramatic pieces, neither of which fatigues the mind, that which gives it the moſt employment muſt afford it the higheſt pleaſure. We do not admire Nature for having compoſed all faces of a noſe, a mouth and two eyes; but we ad-

mire her for having made them all ſo different at the ſame time, that ſhe has compoſed them all of the ſame parts: thus Simplicity and Diverſity pleaſe by their union: the one is but little worthy of attention; but to make up for this, it requires but little attention; it has no other fault, but that of being inſipid: the other is pleaſing, and deſerves our attention; but it is of a vaſt extent, an extent capable of diſtracting the mind. From hence it follows, that when they unite, ſimplicity gives proper limits to diverſity, and that diverſity adds ornaments to ſimplicity. Diverſity of action then, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, is, therefore, as eſſential as unity and ſimplicity.

The Italians render their pieces highly entertaining by inſerting in them a great number of intrigues and incidents; princes diſguiſed or ignorant of their own quality; letters expreſſed in an equivocal manner, or which fall into the hands of others than thoſe for whom they were intended; pictures loſt; miſtakes that happen during

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ing the night, ſurprizing and unforeſeen events, they think they can never have enough of theſe intereſting and amuſing adventures.

Our early dramatic poets, Shakeſpear, Johnſon and Fletcher, who ſeem to have taken the Italians in a great meaſure for their models, have filled many of their pieces with a variety of incidents; Dryden has in many of his plays followed them in this. Pieces of intrigue were for ſome time in faſhion in France, but this taſte was not of long continuance. M. le Sage, in his Diable Boiteux juſtly remarks, that it is impoſſible to decide which the preference ſhould be given to, pieces of intrigue or pieces of character: the Spaniards, ſays he, who have declared for the firſt, and the French, who have decided for the latter, ſhould not be allowed to vote in the queſtion, ſince they are parties concerned. To this we may add, that no piece can be reckoned perfect that does not unite both theſe beauties; and many ſuch the Engliſh ſtage may boaſt of in

the comic way: I ſhall inſtance only the Suſpicious Huſband, the Merry Wives of Windſor, the Journey to London, the Double Dealer, the Plain Dealer, and Love for Love.

Few of our tragedies can boaſt of an intrigue at once complicated and well-conducted; our neighbours the French have certainly ſurpaſſed us in this particular: the Andromaque and Britannicus of Racine, the Horatii of Corneille, and the Ines de Caſtro of La Motte Houdart, muſt be allowed to be maſter-pieces of art and invention: the ſituations are ſo happily choſen, the incidents ſo well arranged, and the cataſtrophe brought about in ſo ſurprizing a manner, that if they were even wrote in proſe they would ſtill have a great deal of merit. Poſſibly the Italians and Spaniards, who by means of the conſtraint in which women live amongſt them, are more accuſtomed to adventures than we are, may, for that reaſon, take greater pleaſure in the repreſentation of them; perhaps too, the ſu-

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perior livelineſs of their intellectual faculties may make that ſimple and eaſy to them, which is perplexing and difficult to the French and us; or, perhaps, and that ſeems moſt probable, they take delight in pieces of intrigue only becauſe they know no better.

CHAP. VIII.

Model of a perfect Intrigue.

I DO not think there can be a better method to diſcover the ſecret to diverſify an action agreeably, than to examine the art with which Corneille has conducted his tragedy of Les Horaces: as Mr. Whitehead has obliged the world with an elegant imitation of this piece, moſt of our readers have undoubtedly ſome knowledge of the plan: the three Horatii fight for Rome, and the three Curiatii for Alba; two of the Horatii are ſlain, and the third, who alone ſurvives, finds means to vanquiſh the three Curiatii: hiſtory furniſhes nothing farther to the plot, and nothing ſurely can be more ſimple and leſs ſuſceptible of diverſity. If we then examine the variety of ornaments which the poet has added to it, the more attentively we con-

conſider them, the greater will be our ſurprize. He repreſents the Horatii and the Curiatii as relations upon the point of ſtrengthening their tyes by marriage: one of the Horatii had married Sabina ſiſter of the Curiatii, and one of the Curiatii is in love with Camilla ſiſter of the Horatii. At the opening of the piece Alba and Rome are engaged in a war, and that ſame day a deciſive battle is expected. Sabina grieves that ſhe had her brothers in one of the armies and her huſband in the other; which makes it impoſſible for her to rejoice in the ſucceſs of either party. Camilla hoped for peace that ſame day, and had formed a perſuaſion upon the ſtrength of an oracle; but her apprehenſions are renewed by a dream. Meantime Curiatius comes to inform her, that the chiefs of Alba and Rome upon the point of engaging were ſeized with horror at the thoughts of ſhedding ſo much blood, and had formed a reſolution to put an end to the war by a combat of three againſt three, and that they had already

made a truce. Camilla receives theſe happy tidings with tranſport, and Sabina feels an equal joy. The three Horatii are choſen to combat on the ſide of Rome, and Curiatius congratulates them upon that honour; and at the ſame time laments that his brothers-in-law muſt periſh, or Alba become ſubject to Rome: but how is his concern doubled, when he is informed, that his two brothers and he are choſen to combat on the part of Alba. What a fruitful ſource of diſtreſs is this to the perſons of the play, the war itſelf was to them leſs terrible: Sabina and Camilla are more alarmed than ever, one is reduced to a neceſſity of loſing either her huſband or her brothers; the other, her brothers or her lover, and that by each others hands. The combatants themſelves are moved and touched with compaſſion; however, they are obliged to part in order to take the field. When the two armies behold them, they cannot bear that perſons ſo nearly related ſhould enter the liſts againſt each other; hereupon, a ſacri-

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fice is made in order to know the will of heaven. Hope ſprings afreſh in the boſom of Sabina, but the breaſt of Camilla is ſtill poſſeſt by boding fears. They receive intelligence, that there are no hopes left; that the gods approve the combat, and that the combatants have begun the fight. Hence Deſpair ſprings anew, and the diſtreſs becomes deeper. Intelligence is then brought, that two of the Horatii are ſlain, the third put to flight, and the three Curiatii in poſſeſſion of the field of battle. Camilla regrets her two brothers, but feels a ſecret joy at hearing that her lover is alive and conqueror: Sabina, who loſes neither her brothers nor her huſband is tolerably well ſatisfied; but the father of the Horatii, who has nothing at heart but the intereſt of Rome, which is upon the point of falling into ſubjection to Alba, and almoſt in deſpair at the thoughts of the ſhame with which the flight of his ſon would brand the family, ſwears, that he will puniſh him for his cowardice, and deprive him of life with his

his own hands; this throws Sabina into a new inquietude. At laſt intelligence of a quite contrary nature is brought to the old Horatius, the flight of his ſon was only a ſtratagem by him made uſe of in order to conquer the three Curiatii, who were left dead upon the field of battle. Nothing can be more admirable than the manner in which this action is conducted; the original is not to be found amongſt the antients, nor could any modern ever copy it. The ſecret of this conduct conſiſts in my opinion, in branching out an action into as many parts as are capable of giving riſe to different ſentiments in the perſonages, whether theſe are of oppoſite kinds, or, whether it be, that even amongſt thoſe of the ſame kind, ſome are of a force ſuperior to others.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the method of contraſting Characters.

THERE are two different ſpecies of contraſt. The firſt conſiſts in making the perſons of the piece paſs from joy to grief, from fear to hope, or from joy or fear of an inferior kind to one of a higher degree of force. The firſt is the moſt agreeable, becauſe it occaſions a compleat contraſt. The other, however, is capable of producing very conſiderable effects; but upon the whole, a piece wherein a ſingle paſſion ſhould reign throughout, or at leaſt, ſhould predominate almoſt to the end, even if it ſhould receive a continual increaſe, would pleaſe leſs than the ſtruggle of thwarting paſſions. Thus Richard and Macbeth, which turn from beginning to ending upon ambition and its effects, are, perhaps, leſs capable of affecting an audience than Venice

nice Preſerved, the Fatal Marriage, the Fair Penitent, and other pieces; which, though the works of inferior genius's, and of a leſs ſublime nature, than the tragedies above-mentioned, by repreſenting a conflict of paſſions, by putting love in oppoſition to revenge, repreſenting a ſtruggle between fidelity to a friend and party, compaſſion for a country, and tenderneſs for a wife, excite the ſame tumult in the breaſts of the ſpectators, by which the boſoms of the perſons of the drama are torn and agitated. In Painting, the drapery produces a greater effect by the repreſentation of antiquated dreſſes, than by that of our ordinary habits, becauſe they are more various and flowing. In like manner the tiſſue of a tragedy, if I may be allowed that expreſſion, ſhould be flowing, ſhould preſent different faces, and ſhould have a variety of motions. Beſides the contraſt to be met with in the different parts of an action, the contraſt of characters contributes highly to add variety to a piece. In a picture, two figures that have

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preciſely the ſame attitude, are not greater blemiſhes, than two perſons in a tragedy that have exactly the ſame character. This is a capital defect in the Cato of Mr. Addiſon: there is ſcarce the leaſt ſhadow of difference between the characters of Cato, Portius and Juba. Thoſe of Portia and Lucia are no better contraſted. This circumſtance gives a ſameneſs to a piece that cannot fail of producing a very diſagreeable effect. The *Claro-obſcuro* is as eſſential, and productive of as pleaſing conſequences in poetry as in painting. The moſt ſtriking contraſt, is that between oppoſite paſſions, as deſire of vengeance in Iago, and tenderneſs in Othello, heroic virtue in Tamerlane, and lawleſs ambition in Bajazet; but even paſſions of the ſame nature often afford a very agreeable contraſt. It is thus that Marcus and Portius both equally virtuous, both equally inſpired with love for their country, have ſcarce any reſemblance even in the ſentiments which they have in common. One has a noble ferocity; a virtuous indigna-

dignation at the ſucceſs of the tyrant which diſcovers itſelf in all his words and actions; in the character of Portius, tenderneſs and humanity ſeem to prevail. But it is not the talent of every poet to contraſt characters which have a reſemblance. In fine, when it is not poſſible, that the difference between two characters ſhould be ſtrongly mark'd; it would not, however, be amiſs to aſſign the reaſons for their differing in opinion, or, to account for the difference of the emotions which the ſame paſſions excite in their breaſts. Shakeſpear has marked this difference in the moſt maſterly manner imaginable in the tragedy of Julius Cæſar: Brutus and Caſſius, have in the main, the ſame character, and the ſame intereſt; but whilſt one appears enterprizing and ſanguine, the other proceeds ſedately upon the principles of reaſon and philoſophy. Some oppoſition of ſentiment is abſolutely neceſſary between the interlocutors of a dialogue, otherwiſe a dialogue would be little better than a ſoliloquy.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of the Furberia della Scena; or, Theatrical Artifice.

THEATRICAL artifices are innumerable. They include every thing that occaſions ſurprize, either in the ſpectators, or any of the perſons of the play, every thing that produces an effect different from what was expected; and, it is evident, that nothing is better calculated to excite curioſity. The circumſtance of Juliet's awaking after Romeo has taken the poiſon, though it produces no ſurprize in the ſpectators, works moſt powerfully upon their paſſions, on account of the ſurprize and whirlwind of paſſion that it excites in the breaſt of Romeo, and the the encreaſe of Juliet's diſtreſs occaſioned by the ſudden tranſition from the livelieſt tranſport of joy to the deepeſt affliction.

A circumſtance of the like nature produces an equal effect in the Fatal Marriage, though the return of Iſabella's huſband is foreſeen by the audience, the extraordinary emotions of ſurprize and anguiſh mingled with a defeated joy which this event excites in her breaſt, render it highly intereſting and affecting to the audience. But thoſe incidents which occaſion ſurprize in the ſpectators affect them in a manner ſtill more agreeable; theſe, indeed, are but rare in Tragedy; Comedy is a much more fertile ſource of theſe pleaſing enchantments. No poet of any nation has ſurpaſſed Ben Johnſon in this particular: he has diſplayed ſo much invention in the contrivance of his plots, and ſo much art in the arrangement of of the incidents of his intrigues, that the mind of his auditors is conſtantly kept in an agreeable ſuſpenſe, or, rather conducted through a labyrinth, whoſe variety pleaſes without perplexing. His Every Man out of his Humour, Fox, Alchymiſt, and Silent Woman, are maſter-pieces of

intrigue

intrigue and invention; the auditor is every moment ſurpriſed in the moſt agreeable manner, and nothing can equal his ſolicitude to know the Denouement, but his ſurprize at the manner in which the poet brings it about. This excellent author, has admirably fulfilled the precept of Horace,

Semper ad Eventum feſtinat.

De Arte poetica.

Upon the whole, it muſt be acknowledged, that Comedy is much more ſuſceptible than tragedy, of what the French call Jeux de Theatre; and there are many excellent tragedies, both in French and Engliſh, in which there are none at all.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Tragedy conſidered with regard to the Paſſions.

HITHERTO we have conſidered in an action only that which is capable of pleaſing the underſtanding; this is not ſufficient, the heart ſhould likewiſe be taken into conſideration. A piece poſſeſſed of all the qualities above-mentioned, might, indeed, command the attention; but ſomething farther is required, it ſhould likewiſe intereſt the auditors, and touch their paſſions. We deſire to be moved, agitated, and even to ſhed tears. This pleaſure that men take in weeping, has ſomething in it, that ſeems ſo difficult to account for, that I cannot forbear being ſomewhat extenſive in my reflections on it. Is it poſſible, that any one could be ſo utterly depraved as to take pleaſure in ſeeing a friend in as unhappy a ſituation, as

that

that of Jaffier, in Venice Preſerved? It is undoubtedly, a contradiction, that ſuch a perſon ſhould exiſt: and, yet the extream deſpair of Jaffier, his ſtruggles between love for his country and fidelity to his friend, his agonies and tormenting inquietudes, pleaſe the ſpectators, becauſe the poet has pre-poſſeſſed them in his favour. What can be the reaſon, that we are affected in a pleaſing manner, by an object, the reality of which would afflict us? The celebrated Monſ. de Fontenelle, accounts for this ſeeming paradox, in the following manner: Pleaſure and pain, ſays that agreeable writer, tho' ſenſations of ſo oppoſite a nature, do not differ much with regard to the cauſes that produce them. It appears from the example of tickling, that a pleaſing emotion carried too far becomes painful; and, that a painful ſenſation, when it begins to ſubſide and grow moderate, becomes pleaſing. Hence proceeds that pleaſing melancholy, which moſt men have experienced, and which is nothing but pain weakened and diminiſhed.

niſhed. The heart naturally loves to be agitated; for this reaſon, melancholy objects ſuit it, and even painful objects, provided they are in ſome meaſure ſoftened and mitigated. Certain it is, that a theatrical repreſentation produces almoſt the effect of reality; but it does not do ſo altogether; let a ſpectator be ever ſo ſtrongly influenced by the force of theatrical deluſion; let the ſenſes and the imagination obtain ever ſo great an aſcendant over reaſon, there always remains at the bottom of the heart an indiſtinct perſuaſion of the falſhood of what we behold. This idea, though weak and wrapt in obſcurity, is ſufficient to diminiſh our grief at beholding the ſufferings of one we love, and to bring down this grief to the degree at which it begins to be changed into pleaſure. We weep at the misfortunes of a hero that has gained our affections, and the moment after we receive conſolation from the knowledge we have that the diſtreſs is altogether fictitious; and, it is preciſely, from this mixture of oppoſite ſentiments,

timents, that this pleaſing grief, theſe tears of delight ariſe. Moreover, as this affliction, which is cauſed by the impreſſion of ſenſible and external objects, is ſtronger than the comfort which proceeds entirely from an internal reflection, the effects and ſymptoms of grief muſt predominate in this coalition. The characters that draw theſe tears from our eyes muſt be aimable and intereſting: But by what method can we render them amiable and intereſting? It is enough that they be unhappy. It is looked upon by all ſenſible perſons, as a ſort of merit to fall into great misfortunes; and they naturally attract our affection, provided the character has no other qualities to alienate us from it. The hero and heroine of the piece, find the ſpectators biaſſed in their favour; and to make them take part in their diſtreſs it is ſufficient that there is nothing in their characters that can diſpleaſe. It is to be remarked, however, that this maxim is true only with regard to characters little known from hiſtory, concerning whom we have

not preconceived any ſublime or elevated idea; ſuch characters are eaſily rendered intereſting. Such is Varanes in Theodoſius; or, The Force of Love. But a Cæſar, or an Alexander, can never intereſt us without coming up to the idea which their names excite in us. And it is not enough, that their great exploits are related in the progreſs of the piece, we ſhould ſee them act conformably to their characters in the courſe of it. Shakeſpear's tragedy of Julius Cæſar is very defective in this reſpect, the character of the great man who gives his name to the play, is one of the ſhorteſt in it, and by no means comes up to our conception of that illuſtrious hero. The ſame objection may be made to the Alexander of Lee, as well as to that of Racine: the former has preſerved only the extravagance of the hero; the latter has converted him into a languiſhing lover. We find him entirely engroſſed by the love of Cleophile, who has no merit capable of engaging the eſteem of the ſpectator. It is true, towards the

latter

latter end of the piece Alexander behaves in a very generous manner, he reſtores Porus his kingdom; but we do not eſteem him the more for this, becauſe he had done nothing that could ſignalize him before. To bear an unjuſt oppreſſion, be treated with ingratitude or black treachery, are the misfortunes which conciliate the ſtrongeſt affection to thoſe who fall into them; and ſuch is the force with which they attract our hearts, that the ferocius Othello after his barbarous murder excites the utmoſt compaſſion in the breaſts of the ſpectators. The virtuous Alonzo in the Revenge ſhould be ſtill more intereſting; but the author of that piece had not the art of drawing characters in the ſame degree of perfection with Shakeſpear; nor can Homer, or the great Corneille, come in competition with him in this reſpect. He had undoubtedly a profound and philoſophical knowledge of the human heart, which appears not only from the art with which he has marked the various ſhades that diſtinguiſh various characters; but, likewiſe, from his excellent moral reflections, which

ſurpaſs thoſe of Tacitus and Corneille in juſtneſs and depth. We ought not to think that all virtuous and perfect characters ſhould have a reſemblance, and that every theatrical hero ſhould be the ſame. It is true, all the virtues are often united in characters of this kind; but they do not all ſhine with an equal degree of luſtre. There is one, which on account of the action which paſſes, and the circumſtances in which the hero is placed, gains the aſcendant, and becomes the reigning virtue of the piece. The others continue in obſcurity and ſilence for want of an occaſion to bring them to light; it is enough, if we perceive nothing oppoſite to them. Thus we find the ſame degree of virtue or vice repreſented in a very different manner in different characters of Shakeſpear: ambition is the leading quality in Macbeth, Richard, and the King in Hamlet; yet how differently is it characterized in each of them! In the firſt, it is accompanied by perturbation: in the ſecond, by craft: and in the third, by remorſe of conſcience.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Contains two farther explications of the ſubject in queſtion.

HAVING thus laid before the reader the ſentiments of the judicious M. de Fontenelle, upon this unaccountable pleaſure which the ſpectators of a tragedy receive from ſorrow, terror, anxiety, and other paſſions, which are in themſelves diſagreeable and uneaſy, we ſhall proceed to conſider the remarks which thoſe few criticks who have had ſome tincture of philoſophy have made upon this extraordinary phænomenon. The Abbe du Bos, in his reflections upon poetry and painting, aſſerts, that nothing is more inſupportable to the mind, than a languid, liſtleſs ſtate of indolence. Hence it ariſes, that whatever can contribute to rouſe the paſſions, is always ſure to produce the moſt pleaſing

effect imaginable upon the human mind. It is for this reaſon, continues that judicious writer, that the moſt ſhocking and terrible object in nature; namely, The ſeeing a man put to death in cold blood by his fellow-creature at an execution, never fails to draw a numerous concourſe of beholders. The emotions raiſed by ſo hideous a ſpectacle, are preferable to that inſipid languor which ariſes from perfect tranquility and repoſe. Though this account muſt be allowed in ſome meaſure ſatisfactory, it may with reaſon be objected to, as it ſtill leaves room for another queſtion; namely, Why does the mind take pleaſure to be rouſed from its indolence, by beholding the miſery of others? The moſt probable ſolution of this difficulty, ſeems to be that given by the philoſophical poet of antiquity, Lucretius.

Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis
E terrâ magnum alterius ſpectare laborem,
Non quia vexari quemquam eſt jucunda voluptas
Sed malis quibus ipſe careas quia cernere ſuave eſt.

De rerum Naturâ.

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The learned and ingenious Mr. Hume, has offered another explanation of this ſingular and unaccountable ſource of pleaſure. The whole effect, according to this author, proceeds from that very eloquence with which the melancholy ſcene is repreſented. So that, according to this hypotheſis, our pleaſure ſprings entirely from reflecting upon the art and ingenuity diſplayed by the author, whilſt the object repreſented has no ſhare in exciting the delightful ſenſation. It muſt be acknowledged, that there is ſomething plauſible in this hypotheſis: it can never be maintained, that the pleaſure we receive from a poetical deſcription, or a piece of painting, is owing to circumſtances that would pleaſe us in nature. Swift's Dreſſing Room, and other poems of the ſame nature, are read with pleaſure by every body; but ſurely, no one will preſume to aſſert, That this pleaſure owes its riſe to the beauty of the things repreſented. Thoſe horrid objects, crucifixions and martyrdoms,

tyrdoms, in which nothing appears but tortures, wounds, and paſſive ſufferings, are beheld with pleaſure likewiſe; But is there any thing pleaſing in the objects themſelves? This reaſoning muſt be allowed to be juſt and ingenious, and appears to carry with it ſomething convincing, when corroborated by what the author adds, That a ſubordinate paſſion enhances that which is predominant; ſo, that as ſome degree of jealouſy is neceſſary to keep up the flame of love, the uneaſineſs proceeding from the object repreſented heightens the pleaſure we receive from contemplating the art and eloquence of the author We apprehend, upon the whole, that this account alſo requires ſome addition; it ſeems probable, that the repreſentation of the diſtreſſes of great and eminent perſons pleaſe us, by abating the envy which their exaltation raiſes in us; and by affording us ſome conſolation for our own weakneſs and calamities, by ſhewing us, that the greateſt and moſt powerful of mankind, are not exempted from the ſame ſufferings. CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Rules to be obſerved in drawing Theatrical Characters.

A Character which is to be repreſented as virtuous, ſhould be free from faults. Either we do not look upon love as a weakneſs; or elſe, it is the only weakneſs we excuſe in tragedy heroes; and, even they, ſhould upon occaſion, ſacrifice it to nobler ſentiments. It is further to be remarked, that perſons of a diſtinguiſhed character in a piece, ſhould love none but women of a character equally ſhining; Hamlet's love for Ophelia, in whom there is nothing ſtriking, ſeems to be a defect in his character; the conſiſtency of which, may be objected to in ſeveral reſpects; I ſhall mention but one: His directions given to a player, in the ſtile of an adept in the profeſſion,

ſeem to be not all in the character of a prince. The plan of this tragedy ſeems likewiſe to be more irregular than that of any of the plays of Shakeſpear that are acted. It were to be wiſhed, that Mr. Garrick, who, by his judicious alteration of Romeo and Juliet, the Gameſters, &c. ſhews himſelf to be a perfect maſter of what regards the dramatic conſtruction of a fable, would take this piece in hand; it is a maſter-piece of what Longinus calls the Terrible Graces, and might be made much ſuperior to the Electra of Sophocles. The hero of a piece ſhould never be faulty; nay, there ſhould be in him no appearance of evil. If he has a bad ſide, the poet ſhould hide it, and paint his face in profile. Alexander ſhould be repreſented as conqueror of the world, but not as cruel or mad. Nat. Lee, has offended againſt this rule, by drawing his hero as mad as himſelf. Virtuous and amiable characters, may be reduced to two claſſes: thoſe of a ſoft, tender, and innocent nature; and, thoſe that are more

noble

noble, elevated, courageous, and haughty. They are all repreſented upon the ſtage in calamitous ſituations; and, thoſe which appear more ſenſible of their evils, that make uſe of the moſt words in their complaints, eaſily excite compaſſion in the breaſts of the ſpectators, and by diſcovering much emotion, raiſe emotions equally ſtrong in the beholders. This is taken notice of by Horace in his Art of Poetry.

Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adflent
Humani Vultus &
Si vis me flere; dolendum eſt
Primum ipſe tibi.

The poet has ſatisfied himſelf with obſerving the phænomenon without attempting to give any explanation of it. What ſeems moſt probable is, that it proceeds from our being, with regard to the heart, all of a ſimilar compoſition. Montaigne, and other authors, who have taken human nature for their ſubject, have done little more than paint themſelves; and, it

is

is highly probable, that they owe all their ſucceſs to the ſelf-love inherent in our nature. Thus we may look upon a human being ſympathizing with the affections of another, as a muſical inſtrument, whoſe tones correſpond with thoſe of another inſtrument tuned in the ſame manner. Characters of another kind, that preſerve in their misfortunes as much courage as ſenſibility, that ſcorn to complain, either excite admiration alone, or excite a pity mixed with admiration; and, which may be received by the nobleſt hearts. We pity the firſt, and when we apply their misfortunes to ourſelves, we ſhudder with dread; we admire the others ſo highly, that we could almoſt wiſh to have their misfortunes with their ſentiments. When we behold the noble behaviour of Cato, under the preſſure of ſo great misfortunes, we are often diſpoſed to wiſh ourſelves in his place; or, as Mr. Pope expreſſes it in his excellent Prologue:

Who ſees him act, but envies ev'ry deed;
Who hears him groan, and does not wiſh
to bleed.

Jane Shore and Caliſta, are women, whoſe misfortunes ſpring alike, from unlawful love; and theſe two characters are very proper to ſhew us the difference between theſe two different ſorts of compaſſion. Soft characters, may intereſt us by a love at once tender and delicate; and their manner of loving becomes in them a new merit. Such are Romeo and Juliet, Torriſmond, and Leonora. Characters of greater elevation have a more elevated ſort of love; to which it is difficult to communicate that affecting ſoftneſs already mentioned: but they have this advantage, that the admiration which they excite renders them more amiable than even compaſſion itſelf could do; or rather, they at once excite both pity and admiration. Polydore, in the Orphan, is ardent, impetuous, and inſolent; and yet,

yet, with all its vices, the character is not unamiable. The character of Pierre, in Venice Preſerved, has ſomething impiouſly daring and licentious, which, undoubtedly, proceeds from the libertiniſm of Otway, who wrote it; yet, this character intereſts auditors, and excites their compaſſion in the moſt forcible manner. Whatever has an air of boldneſs, elevation, independence, is pleaſing to our nature; which is generally diſpoſed to afford a higher degree of eſteem to magnanimity and courage than to prudence. On the other hand, that which is regular, and conducted with diſcretion, has ſomething cold, which may ſometimes even give a handle to ridicule: not, that every character repreſented upon the ſtage, ſhould have a tincture of libertiniſm; reaſonable and virtuous characters, ſhould undoubtedly be preferred; but an author ſhould endeavour to give them as much of the vigour and fire of a Pierre as poſſible. The Brutus of Shakeſpear, is a ſufficient proof, that a grave and virtuous character, may be as animated and awakening

awakening upon the ſtage, as that of a tyrant mad with pride. The agitations of mind felt by Brutus after Caſſius had excited him againſt Cæſar, are deſcribed in as ſtriking and pictureſque a manner, as the perturbation of mind felt by Macbeth, whilſt he is deliberating on, and after he has committed, the murder. Nothing can be more juſt, and at the ſame time poetical, than that reflection:

Since Caſſius firſt did whet me againſt
Cæſar,
I have not ſlept; between the acting of
a dreadful thing
And the firſt motion, all the interim's
Like a Phantaſma, or, a hideous dream.
The genius and the mortal inſtruments
Are then in council; and the whole ſtate
of man,
Like to a little kingdom, ſuffers then
The nature of an inſurrection.

As the latter part of this paſſage contains ſomething obſcure, which does not ſeem to have been well explained by commentators,

mentators, I ſhall beg leave to offer a conjecture upon it. Dr. Warburton, by the genius underſtands the genius of the Republick; and, by the mortal inſtruments, the conſpirators. In thus explaining the paſſage before us, he ſeems to have had an eye to what Salluſt ſays concerning the Allobroges; that whilſt they were deliberating, whether they ſhould diſcover the conſpiracy to Cicero, who was then Conſul, or join in it: *Vicit tandem ingenium Reipublicæ.* This interpretation ſeems altogether forced and unnatural. What I apprehend to be the author's meaning, is this, That in deliberating upon any deſperate action, the mind (for here the genius can mean nothing elſe) is apt to dwell upon every thing which has any relation to the execution of its purpoſes. Thus whilſt Macbeth is meditating the murder of the king, he thinks he ſees the dagger which he was to uſe; and, for ſome time, holds a conference with it. Theſe two lines ſeem ſtriking:

Thou

Thou marſhalſt me the way that I am going;
And ſuch an inſtrument I was to uſe.

This ſpeech, compared with the obſcure paſſage above cited, ſeems to be the beſt interpretation of it. To confirm us ſtill farther in this opinion, we find, that Mr. Addiſon, in the celebrated ſoliloquy of Cato, repreſents the virtuous patriot, whilſt deliberating on ſelf-ſlaughter, as holding a ſort of dialogue with the ſword, with which he intended to kill himſelf, and Plato's Phædon, which he reads, in order to prepare himſelf for death:

It muſt be ſo: Plato, thou reaſoneſt well.
Thus am I doubly arm'd; my death and life;
My bane and antidote, are both before me.
This, in a moment, brings me to an end;
But this, informs me, I ſhall never die.

To mark the different workings of the mind in virtuous and vicious men, is a point ſo very nice and difficult, that Shakeſpear alone could ſucceed in it. Brutus was as much a ſtoick philoſopher, and as virtuous a man as Cato; nor was he inferior to him in courage and reſolution.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Uſe of Tragedy.

AN opportunity here offers of making ſome reflections upon the Uſe of Tragedy. I could never comprehend what ſome criticks mean, by purging the paſſions by means of the paſſions themſelves; ſo, I ſhall not enlarge upon their hypotheſis. If any one is purged by this method ſo much the better; yet, I do not ſee what purpoſe it can anſwer, to be cured of pity. As the ingenious author of Douglas obſerves, in the Epilogue to that tragedy:

------ Pity, is the beſt,
The nobleſt, Paſſion, of the human breaſt.

In my opinion, the chief uſe of the Theatre, is, to make Virtue appear amiable

able to men; to uſe them to intereſt themſelves in her favour; to give their minds this bias; to ſet before them great examples of reſolution and courage, in misfortunes; and, by that means, to render their ſentiments ſtronger, and more ſublime. Hence it follows, that the ſtage not only requires virtuous characters; but, that it requires them to be virtuous in the elevated and noble manner of Shakeſpear; they ſhould confirm the heart, and give leſſons of courage. Other characters, virtuous likewiſe; but more conformable to human nature, in general, would too much ſoften and enervate the ſoul, and communicate to the ſpectator, an habit of weakneſs and dejection. We have ſeen, that characters are rendered intereſtng, either by their misfortunes or their virtue; and, that they become ſtill more ſo, when they at once ſuffer great misfortunes, and are endowed with ſhining virtues. But, How much greater muſt the effect be, if Virtue itſelf produces the diſtreſs? A misfortune becomes affecting

affecting in proportion to the virtue of him who falls into it. In the misfortune of Siffredi, who himſelf cauſes the ruin of his family, he would be much leſs pitied than he is, when it is conſidered, that it proceeds from adhering inviolably to his duty as a patriot. Next to the misfortunes which men fall into by their virtue, the moſt affecting are thoſe into which they fall by the crime or injuſtice of another. Innocence oppreſſed, or unſuſpecting virtue betrayed, become more amiable by the hatred conceived for the oppreſſors or betrayers. In ſubjects of this nature, tyrants cannot be repreſented in colours too black, ſince the horror which they raiſe turns to the advantage of the hero. Iago and Zanga, encreaſe our love for Othello and Alonzo. The love of virtue, and the hatred of vice, is the ſame ſentiment in two different ſhapes; and, to contribute to the variety and contraſt of the theatre, it ſhould comprehend both. There is another ſort of affecting misfortunes; theſe are they into which the hero falls by

a pardonable weakneſs; and the only weakneſs which is excuſed in a hero, as we have already obſerved, is love. We pity thoſe whom it renders unhappy, as much as if they were made ſo by their virtue; witneſs, Romeo and Juliet, Anthony and Cleopatra. It is to be remarked, however, that ſpectators are more favourable to this paſſion in the former characters than in the latter; becauſe in the latter, love triumphs over a more noble ſentiment. Love has the privilege of expoſing heroes to misfortunes, but not to ſhame. In fine, thoſe into which men fall, neither by their virtue, nor by the crime of another, but by a blind fatality, ſuch as the misfortune of Œdipus, appear to be the leaſt affecting. It is not but that they inſpire us with ſufficient horror, but they do not intereſt us in favour of the perſons. Were you to hear an account of a man poiſoned by a perſon whom he had loaded with favours; whom in his will he had choſen for his heir; and to whom he had even ſpoke tenderly on his death-

death-bed: were you, on the other hand, to hear an account of a man killed by thunder, What impreſſions would theſe two different events make upon you? The black ingratitude, as well as the deſtroying thunder, both alike fill you with horror: but that frightful ingratitude prejudices you in favour of him who ſuffered it; you tenderly lament his misfortune; whereas, the thunder-clap leaves you in a ſtate of indifference for him that was ſlain by it; his perſon does not thereby become more dear to you. You hate, you deteſt the poiſoner; but you neither hate, nor ought to hate him, who launced the thunder. In fine, this laſt event preſents us with a frightful idea from which we turn our imagination aſide, as ſoon as poſſible; whereas, the other gives riſe to a ſort of pity, which we endeavour to cheriſh as long as we can; and, that with great complacency, and what proves this is our pleaſure in dwelling upon all the circumſtances of the latter, and even exaggerating them with ſome

delight.

delight. It is eaſy to ſee, that the misfortune of Œdipus, is like a clap of thunder; and, that it is not capable of producing the ſame effect. From the repreſentation of Œdipus, and pieces of the like nature, ſpectators bring back only a diſagreeable and uſeleſs conviction of the miſery of the human condition. When the perſons are once rendered amiable, either by their virtue, or their misfortunes, or both together: when our hearts are are once gained, whatever befalls them affects us; their joys and griefs become our own: and, yet whatever affection we may have for them, we would not be glad to ſee them a long time in joy; and, yet an author may, through the whole courſe of a piece, ſhew us the perſons of it in diſtreſs. There ſeems to be ſomething unaccountable in this; the beſt ſolution of this difficulty, appears to be, That as men are in general more ſenſible of grief than joy; and, as the ſtage diminiſhes all impreſſions, as we have explained above, theſe two ſenſations being

equally

equally diminiſhed, grief ſtill retains force enough to excite in us very lively emotions, though joy is not capable of producing the ſame effect. Thus a ſcene which repreſents an interview between two happy lovers ſhould paſs off very quick; the rapturous ſcene between Othello and Deſdemona, in Shakeſpear, affects us powerfully, becauſe it is not of long continuance; were it ſpun out to a greater length, it would tire us; whereas, a ſcene between two unhappy lovers, who dwell upon all the circumſtances of their miſeries, may be of a conſiderable length without being tedious. Another reaſon may be given from the nature of the human mind. Curioſity is no longer concerned with happy perſons, ſhe turns her view from them, unleſs ſhe foreſees that they will fall again into their misfortunes; and is engaged by the expectation of this relapſe. In that caſe, this contraſt very agreeably diverſifies the ſpectacle offered to the mind, and the paſſions which agitate the heart. The ſentiments which the hero excites in us, ſhould, if poſſible, receive

a continual increaſe, at leaſt their dimunition would produce a very bad effect. A weakneſs however inconſiderable in a character which till then had appeared elevated, a leſſer danger or misfortune after a greater would not fail to diſpleaſe. The heart once accuſtomed to a lively and agreeable agitation can no longer bear either repoſe or an agitation leſs violent. The more amiable the hero of a piece is, the more neceſſary it is to make him happy at the concluſion. The ſpectator ſhould not be diſmiſſed with ſorrow for the unhappy fate of a virtuous man. After having been a long time concerned for a favourite character, we conſole ourſelves in ſome meaſure, when we leave the perſon for whom we have ſo long trembled out of danger; and this ſatisfaction is reſerved for the laſt ſcene, and enjoyed by the ſpectator only for a moment; that moment is of the greateſt importance, it ſeems to have an influence upon all the preceding incidents of the piece. What has already paſſed ſeems affected by it; it adds a new embelliſhment even to what we have ſeen.

Poetical

Poetical juſtice requires, that Virtue ſhould be happy; and when this rule has been violated in the courſe of a tragedy, this ſhould be compenſated for in the cataſtatrophe. The fineſt leſſon which this moſt grave and moral of all poems can teach mankind, is, that virtue, though long croſſed and perſecuted, will at laſt triumph over all obſtacles and enemies. A voluntary death, which a hero chooſes, in order to avoid a greater misfortune: a death, ſuch as that of Cato; thoſe of Brutus and Caſſius; and that of Cleopatra, ſhould not be reckoned amongſt thoſe unhappy cataſtrophes, which ſend ſpectators home diſſatisfied. The hero dies, it is true; but he dies nobly: he is himſelf the author of his deſtiny; we admire as much as we pity him; and, though the example he ſets would be looked upon as a very bad one amongſt us, it is a bad example which is not dangerous. A hero that kills himſelf is not likely to have many imitators. Diſagreeable concluſions, are thoſe which make the hero die in oppreſſion; thoſe in which Vice triumphs over Virtue.

CHAP. XV.

Tragedy conſidered in an abſtracted and metaphyſical light.

THOUGH we have hitherto conſidered tragedy with regard both to the underſtanding and the heart, we have notwithſtanding conſidered it only in an ordinary point of view; to give a perfect idea of it we ſhould carry our views higher: Let us ſuppoſe, the ſpeculator of Lucian, who from the air contemplates whatever paſſes amongſt men; it can admit of no doubt, that this man's attention would be more engaged by ſome things than others. If he ſaw ſomething important paſs amongſt perſons of diſtinction and of an uncommon character, if in the courſe of this tranſaction nothing happened which could let his curioſity languiſh; if on the contrary, every incident ſhould excite it, ſurprize him,

and

and intereſt him in a lively manner: in a word, if this action had all the qualities which we have hitherto exacted in a tragic action, without doubt, the ſpeculator would keep his eyes fixed upon it rather than any other; and, it can no more admit of a doubt, that it would be fit to repreſent upon the ſtage: but whence does it proceed, that there are many things in it which might pleaſe our imaginary ſpeculator, and, which would notwithſtanding diſpleaſe upon the ſtage? Let this action, in the moment that it is warmeſt, and when its concluſion appears moſt uncertain be terminated by ſomething that could not poſſibly have been foreſeen; by a turn of chance! by means of a perſon who had not appeared in it before; the ſurprize of the ſpeculator in beholding this cataſtrophe will be the more agreeable the leſs it is expected; on the other hand, the ſame concluſion upon the ſtage would diſguſt every body. Let ſomebody concerned in this action, who has conſtantly croſſed the others in their deſigns change his

mind either through laſſitude or natural inconſtancy; this would be a ſource of high pleaſure to the ſpeculator, as it would furniſh ample matter to thoſe who are fond of ſtudying human nature; but nothing would be more inſupportable upon the ſtage. Would the ſpeculator deſire that the action ſhould take up but twenty-four hours and paſs upon one identical place? By no means; for, by the ſuppoſition, he would be able to caſt his eye every where with the ſame facility; and, if the action was to laſt much longer his curioſity would ſtill keep pace with it. But on the ſtage, the unities of time and place contribute greatly to encreaſe the pleaſure of the ſpectators. Whence ariſes the differences between the ſpeculator in queſtion, and thoſe who aſſiſt at the repreſentation of a tragedy? Why does not that which pleaſes the one pleaſe the others likewiſe? Why are their taſtes ſo oppoſite?

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Solution of this Difficulty.

AN action which paſſes in our ſight changes its nature in ſome meaſure when introduced upon the ſtage: it was reality before; it is then only a repreſentation; it was formerly, as it were, a production of nature; on the ſtage it is a work of art. Hence it becomes ſuſceptible of new beauties and new defects. We have hitherto conſidered only the beauties and defects that it might have conſidered in itſelf in its real and natural ſtate independent of the theatre; and although we thought it an unneceſſary conſtraint to avoid all the terms that have a connection with the theatre, and which ſeem to ſuppoſe it; we have, however, confined ourſelves ſtrictly to ideas which

have no neceſſary relation to it; and which ſuppoſe only an action which might paſs before the ſpeculator of Lucian. We ſhall now proceed to conſider the alterations it undergoes by being a repreſentation, and a work of art; and, we ſhall thus anſwer the objections ſtarted in the foregoing article.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Truth and Probability in Dramatic Poems.

SINCE a Drama is a repreſentation, there can be no truth or reality in it; but ſome method muſt be contrived to ſupply the place of truth, for men require truth, or ſomething that has a reſemblance to it. To anſwer this end, we ſhould take known ſubjects, ſuch as Cato, Julius Cæſar, *&c.* and if they are but little known, they ſhould be at leaſt true and hiſtorical, like thoſe of Hamlet and King Lear. If they are neither known nor hiſtorical, they ſhould ſtill have ſome relation to what is hiſtorical and known, like thoſe of Tamerlane and the Siege of Damaſcus; in which there is nothing true but the names. Sometimes ſubjects entirely unknown and fabulous, like that of Tancred and Sigiſmunda, have been treated with ſucceſs;

but the enterprize is hazardous. In ſubjects that are generally known, no circumſtance with which every body is acquainted ſhould be altered; the event, ſhould in the main be adhered to; but the manner in which it was brought about; the circumſtance which accompanied it; and every thing of that nature, is left to the diſcretion of the poet. Nothing is better calculated to pleaſe, than a piece, in which the poet has preſerved every thing hiſtorical; and at the ſame time added incidents ſuited to the general tenor of it. It ſeems, as if he had only filled up the vacancies of hiſtory, and taught it to us in a more full and ſatisfactory manner.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the difference between the True and the Probable.

TRUTH and Probability are widely different: the True, is that which has a real exiſtence: the Probable, is that which we think might exiſt; and we judge of it only from certain ideas which reſult from our common experience. Conſequently, Truth has a much greater extent than Probability, ſince the Probable, is only a ſmall portion of the True, which has ſome conformity with our daily experience: the True does not ſtand in need of proofs, it is enough that it exiſts and ſhews itſelf: the Probable requires them, it muſt have ſome conformity to our preconceived opinions, in order to induce us to give it a reception. Since we can have no certainty concerning the infinite poſſi-

bility of things, we admit as poſſible only thoſe which have ſome reſemblance to ſuch as we ſee frequently. Whatever might fall under the view of the above-mentioned ſpeculator would be true, and conſequently require no proof, let it be of ever ſo extraordinary a nature; but on the ſtage, where every thing is fictitious, the Probable muſt of neceſſity take place of the true. Probability ſhould therefore be preſerved with great care, as well in events as characters, unleſs that which exceeds it be an inconteſtible hiſtorical fact, and univerſally known; in which caſe, the truth is again reinſtated; and, yet it is ſtill dangerous to exhibit a truth that is not probable. When Lucius Junius Brutus puts his ſons to death, the action diſpleaſes not only on account of its exceſſive barbarity, but becauſe the fact, if not confirmed by hiſtory, ſeems entirely deſtitute of probability. Hiſtory itſelf ſeems unwilling to exhibit truths that want probability; ſhe ſoftens as much as ſhe is able thoſe circumſtances that contain too much

much of the marvellous; ſhe endeavours to deviſe views and motives proportioned to the importance of the events and actions; ſhe ſtrives to render the characters uniform and conſiſtent; and this attachment to probability often makes her deviate from truth. It is not to be ſuppoſed, that nature is limited by thoſe narrow rules which conſtitute human probability, or that ſhe adapts herſelf to the laws which we have thought proper to eſtabliſh; but it is the poet's duty to conform to them, and to confine himſelf to the limits of probability.

CHAP. XIX.

Directions how to preſerve the conſiſtency of Characters.

HORACE lays it down as a maxim, that a character ſhould be invariably the ſame through the whole courſe of a play.

Servetur ad imum qualis ab inceptu proceſſerit
Et ſibi conſtet.
Denique ſit quodvis ſimplex duntaxat & unum.
De Arte poeticâ.

When characters are once eſtabliſhed, they ſhould without doubt, always continue like themſelves; and the ſtage does by no means admit of thoſe inequalities and that mixture which we meet with in nature. If inconſiſtent characters are drawn, this inconſiſtency itſelf ſhould be regu-

regulated by a law, and not devoid of method. In Ben Johnſon's excellent comedy of, Every Man out of his Humour, every character changes before the concluſion of the piece; but even the change itſelf ſeems to ſpring from the characteriſtic qualities of each perſon. If the mind was not to perceive a certain unity of character, it would immediately ſuſpect the juſtneſs of it; the ſpectator would then perceive himſelf to be at a play. The character of Lord Foppington in the Relapſe, is very defective; he is ſometimes repreſented as an egregious fop, and ſometimes as a man of wit and humour. If therefore the perſons of a play are not known from hiſtory, their characters ſhould be formed upon the idea which we generally have of their condition, their age and country. In a word, the poet ſhould always conſider, that it is his buſineſs to delude the ſpectator: an end which he can never compaſs without an unlimited complaiſance for all his opinions. The moſt noble and elevated characters

are the oftenest in danger of trespassing against probability. Excess is here to be apprehended; and the heroic characters of Lee and Dr. Young, seem liable to this objection: not but that there is a probability with regard to heroes very different from that which respects other men; but this probability is as easy to perceive as difficult to ascertain. Jaffier must displease highly in Venice Preserved, when he delivers up his wife to the conspirators as a pledge of his fidelity, with an injunction, to put her to death if he should ever prove unworthy. This seems to go beyond the bounds of all probability. On the other hand, Alonzo, in the Revenge, delights us, when he shews such backwardness to request of his friend Carlos, to resign Leonora to him, though he was sure the favour he asked must be granted, as Carlos was not beloved by Leonora: both these strokes indicate a greatness of soul; but one of them is natural, and extremely beautiful; the other is against nature, and extremely disgusting. To discover the

source

ſource of this difference, and at the ſame time determine, how far generoſity rightly underſtood may extend, it would be neceſſary to enter into reflections too much connected with morality. All I can ſay at preſent is, that an action of generoſity, to be ſtrictly natural, ſhould be produced either by a well-grounded hope of great renown, or, by what has equal influence over great ſouls, a delicacy of ſentiment which ſhould make them dread the ſlighteſt diſhonour; or, in fine, by an exceſſive love of virtue, more uncommon, and more noble, than theſe two motives. Neither of theſe motives affect Jaffier; he neither acquires glory, nor ſhuns diſhonour; nor does any thing to promote the cauſe of virtue. Alonzo, on the other hand, in declining to aſk what he was ſure muſt be granted, diſcovers a delicacy and elevation of mind, which muſt engage the eſteem and affection of every body.

On the other hand, nothing appears more diſguſting, than to make a bold and courageous offer without any danger of

its

its being complied with. It is for this reaſon, the old cuſtom of theatrical lovers, who in their deſpair preſent a ſword to their miſtreſs, and intreat her to pierce their boſoms with it, ſhocks every rational ſpectator by its abſurdity.

With regard to events as well as characters, there are two ſorts of Probability, one ordinary and ſimple, the other extraordinary; as the probable of the adventures of the romance, which are indeed poſſible, though they never happen. Singularity in character produces a great effect upon the ſtage; but it is the reverſe, with regard to events, in theſe the ſingular, at leaſt the romantic ſingular, is not adapted to the genius of tragedy: the reaſon of this is, that tragedy applies rather to the heart than the underſtanding; ſhe chooſes rather to affect by the characters and the ſentiments which they inſpire, than to ſurpriſe by unexpected adventures. What can be better calculated to excite the curioſity, than the heroine diſguiſed in man's cloaths, in the Philaſter of Beaumont and Fletcher;

Fletcher; but this is downright romance, and appears too viſibly to be ſuch. A circumſtance, not exactly of this kind, but ſomewhat bold, if properly placed, would not fail of ſucceſs; but generally ſpeaking, we require ſimple events, capable of producing lively ſenſations. Surprizes are alſo agreeable, but they ſhould rather ſpring from the characters, than from the extraordinary nature of the adventures. As probability is required in a tragedy, in order to prevent the mind from perceiving the fiction that veri-ſimilitude which contributes moſt to the deception, is the moſt perfect; and it is that which is required in tragedy. A character being once ſuppoſed and probable, ſuch as it is ſuppoſed, there are effects which it muſt of neceſſity produce; and others which it may produce or not. A wiſe prince cannot negelect the intelligence of a conſpiracy which is formed againſt him; but he may, through different motives of policy, either pardon or puniſh it. If there is nothing in the character of the prince to

bias

bias him to either of theſe determinations, the choice which the poet makes him take will by no means appear ſatisfactory to the audience. It is true, they will not cenſure the deciſion of the poet, but they will not be able to gueſs what could induce him to it; they will ſee no reaſon for it, but that it is neceſſary, in order to bring the concluſion about; and this is what they ſhould never perceive. Thus the clemency and forbearance of Tamerlane, in his behaviour to Bajazet, though probable, would be a defect; becauſe not more probable than the oppoſite conduct of rigour and ſeverity; but what juſtifies it is, that it is founded upon hiſtory and truth. It is a great perfection, to make the perſons act in ſuch a manner, that they could not act otherwiſe, their character being once aſcertained; and this neceſſity, which ſhould limit the reſolutions and determinations of the perſons, does not exclude deliberations and ſtruggles of paſſion, which are the moſt ſtriking circumſtances of the drama; theſe ſtruggles and deliberations on the

other

other hand become neceſſary. Jaffier being at once ſtrongly attached to his friend Pierre, and at the ſame time touched with the higheſt compaſſion for his country, and powerfully influenced by his wife's importunities, ſhould, no doubt, be repreſented in a conflict and ſtruggle of paſſions; and love for his country, ſhould with much difficulty get the aſcendant. When the determination taken by a perſon is not abſolutely neceſſary, there ſhould, at leaſt, be ſome quality in the character capable of influencing it, to give the preference to ſuch a determination rather than any other. A veri-ſimilitude, which is converted into neceſſity, leaves the ſpectator no uncertainty with regard to the truth of what he ſees; but he is too much ſtruck with the idea of fiction, when the reſemblance is weak and doubtful. This neceſſity which we exact, is required only in events which ſpring from the characteriſtic qualities of the perſons; the other events of the piece, neither ought, nor can be ſubject to this law. Let intelligence arrive at one time

or another; let a combat laſt more or leſs; let a poiſon operate a few moments ſooner or later; all this is purely caſual, and of ſuch a nature, that it will always continue ſo; and, then it is at the poet's diſcretion to conſult his own intereſt, and to chooſe whatever ſuits his purpoſe, without being obliged to aſſign any reaſon for his choice. There is no ſort of neceſſity, that Renault, in Venice Preſerved, ſhould endeavour to debauch the wife of Jaffier; his attempt ſeems inconſiſtent with the character in which he is repreſented; both his age and his predominant paſſion, which is ambition, make this incident highly incongruous: nay, it appears to have ſo little tendency to promote the carrying on of the plot, that one would be inclined to think, the author was induced to inſert it only by that turn to libertiniſm which is ſo conſpicuous in all his works. But as this might poſſibly have happened, as all men ſometimes act out of character, it may be in ſome meaſure excuſed. The ſpectator has equity enough not to exact neceſſity,

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except in ſuch events as flow from a cauſe which would have rendered them neceſſary. The circumſtances of time and place are included in this article of the Probability of a repreſentation.

We have ſeen above, that the ſpeculator of Lucian would not be at all ſolicitous, that the whole event ſhould paſs in one place, and in twenty-four hours; but it were to be wiſhed, that its duration on the ſtage was equivalent to the time that its repreſentation employs the eyes of the ſpectators; and, that it ſhould paſs entirely in the place where the ſpectator is firſt carried to: for ſhould his place be ſhifted too often, or, ſhould the poet endeavour to make him believe, that he had ſeen in two hours what came to paſs in a twelvemonth, he would with eaſe perceive the deception, and the enchantment would vaniſh. This then, is what is called the Unity of Time and Place; and if taken in their higheſt perfection, the action of a tragedy ſhould laſt but two hours; and all the ſcenes ſhould paſs preciſely in the

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ſame place with the firſt. If ſubjects are ſuſceptible of this perfection, they ſhould undoubtedly be preferred to ſuch as are not; but to exact a rigorous obſervation of this rule, would confine poets to a very ſmall number of ſubjects: an inconvenience, to which the dramatic poet is too much ſubjected already; as the whole extent of hiſtory and romance affords but few ſubjects fit to be adorned by Thalia. Theſe Unities are extremely hard to hit; the poet, however, ſhould deviate from them as little as poſſible; but not be very ſolicitous at having miſſed this perfection, as it is not in itſelf a thing of great importance. Do not even the French, who are ſo ſcrupulous with regard to theſe Unities, diſpenſe with the Unity of Place in all their Operas; and, with the exact Unity of Time in almoſt all their Tragedies? The rule of twenty-four hours, is by no means indiſpenſable, or founded on reaſon; it is only a favourable extenſion of the true rule, which does not allow the action to out-laſt the repreſentation.

tation. But, Why does this extenſion go to twenty-four hours? Or, Why does it go no farther? This regulation is entirely arbitrary, and does not deſerve to have any weight with the dramatic writer. And yet this rule is the moſt generally known of any of the rules of the ſtage; it is that which firſt emerged from obſcurity, and for which the criticks have always expreſſed the greateſt zeal. It is a proof how eaſily men receive maxims which they do not underſtand, and how irrationally they attach themſelves to them with ardour!

This Unity, however, ſeems to be of higher importance than that of place. We go to a play prepoſſeſſed that what we are to ſee paſſes in a place different from that in which we are. The change of ſcenes likewiſe contributes to this illuſion; whenever they are ſhifted, we readily believe that the actors have changed place; and, as we never thought ourſelves with them, it is they that are thought to move from one place to another, and not we. But,

with regard to Time, we do not come with a perſuaſion, that what we are to ſee will paſs in a ſpace of Time more conſiderable than that which paſſes while we behold it. There is nothing that can lead us into this error; and the ſpace of two hours, is certainly the meaſure of what paſſes before us during that time: and, yet the unity of place, though perhaps of leſs importance, is more obſerved than that of time. It is eaſier to place all the perſons, not indeed in the ſame apartment, but in the ſame palace, than to include a conſiderable event in two hours time.

When theſe two Unities, as often happens, are incompatible with the nature of the ſubjects, the poet ſhould do his endeavour, to prevent the ſpectator from perceiving the want of them, and call off his attention from the circumſtances of Time and Place. Care is however to be taken, to make every act paſs preciſely in the ſame Place, and in a Time as ſhort as its repreſentation takes up; but if the perſons change Place; if there happens any thing

that

that requires more Time than the repreſentation, all this ſhould be thrown into an interval between two acts. This vacuity, is a privileged ſpace of Time, of which the ſpectators do not require a rigid account. It laſts only a few minutes, and yet it may paſs for many hours, for a whole night; nay, for a much more conſiderable ſpace of Time. For the ſame reaſon, when changes of Place are neceſſary, they ſhould be placed in that interval, on account of the little attention the ſpectators give to it.

CHAP. XX.

Tragedy conſidered as a Work of Art.

WE propoſed to conſider Tragedy, not only as a repreſentation, but as a work of Art; and, in this quality alſo, it is ſuſceptible of beauties and defects. That ſingle idea of Addreſs, or want of Art, embelliſhes or ſpoils the things which in themſelves have neither beauty nor deformity. Few have conſidered, for example, the reaſon why rhimes, which contribute to add beauty to poetry, are inſupportable in proſe; why, the fineſt period in the world may be disfigured by two ſyllables that echo to each other. Have we different ears for proſe and verſe? Whence can this difference ariſe? The reaſon of this is, that there is a difficulty in rhyming which it required Art to ſurmount;

mount; and in proſe, it is a negligence the author has not taken care to avoid. It pleaſes in one of theſe forms, in the other it diſpleaſes. It is therefore certain, that the ſingle idea of difficulty gives a beauty to rhimes, which in themſelves they have not, and that we are pleaſed to ſee the poet under the conſtraint of Art. On the other hand, that which appears to be an effect of the conſtraint of Art is diſagreeable. A verſe ſupportable in itſelf, but which viſibly appears intended only to rhyme, might be received in proſe; but is generally treated with contempt in verſe. All this appears ſomewhat extraordinary; rhymes are loved on account of their difficulty, and, yet the effect that ſprings from this difficulty diſpleaſes. Art muſt be diſplayed in ſome meaſure; for, if we were ignorant, that rhyme is laboured, it would give us no pleaſure; nay, it is highly probable, its monotony would diſguſt us. The Art ſhould likewiſe be concealed in ſome meaſure; for as ſoon as we perceive what is done for the ſake of rhyme,

rhyme, we are diſpleaſed with it. This is an excellent ſubject for one of thoſe inquiries, in which both ſides of the queſtion appear equally true, becauſe neither are well underſtood.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the Beauty of a poetical Stile.

NO Body can be ignorant in what the natural beauty of diſcourſe conſiſts; it is obvious, that it conſiſts in the juſtneſs and vivacity of the thoughts, and the happy choice of the expreſſions; and to theſe Poetry ſuperadds rhyme, in heroic verſe and meaſure, or, a certain determined quantity of ſyllables in blank verſe. They thus become additional beauties, merely by the caprice of art; and for this fantaſtic reaſon, that they lay the poet under ſome conſtraint, and we are curious to ſee with what addreſs he will extricate himſelf. If this new ſubjection makes the poet utter things either forced or uſeleſs, we are more offended by them, than pleaſed with his having obſerved the conſtraint of rhyme or meaſure. But if, not-

withſtanding this conſtraint, he thinks, and expreſſes himſelf as well as if he was at perfect liberty, than to the artificial pleaſure of ſeeing that the conſtraint has ſpoiled nothing, is added the natural pleaſure ariſing from the beauties of language. Art is a tyrant, which takes pleaſure in laying its ſubjects under great difficulties, and which inſiſts at the ſame time upon their appearing at liberty; this puts me in mind of what I have heard concerning the Maldives, whoſe kings carried the refinement of tyranny ſo far, as to make it high treaſon to appear ſad. Thoſe that could not know that the poet was obliged to rhyme ſhould not perceive it; and thoſe who know it, ſhould be ſurpriſed that they do not perceive it. We ſhall conclude this chapter, by that critical axiom, the juſtneſs of which will be called in queſtion by no body: *Ars eſt celare Artem.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

The Application of what has been advanced in the laſt chapter to Tragedy.

IT is eaſy to apply what has been ſaid to Tragedy. Let an action be in itſelf ever ſo intereſting; let the repreſentation have ever ſo great an appearance of probability, it is not ſufficient, Art ſtill ſubjects it to new laws: of which ſome are purely arbitrary, ſuch as meaſure in the verſe: others have ſome foundation in nature and reaſon. That every action ſhould be divided into five parts; that they ſhould be pretty nearly the ſame length; this certainly is not founded in nature, it is a mere caprice. It was firſt enacted into a law by Horace, in his Art of Poetry:

Neu minor, ne ſit quinto productior actu
Fabula quæ poſci vult & ſpectata reponi.

However, though it has been generally obſerved, it can plead nothing but preſcription in its behalf. But here are ſome other regulations, which ſeem a little better grounded. It is equally natural, that an action ſhould be unravelled by ſome accident extrinſic to it; or, by an event whoſe principles are interwoven with the action itſelf. Macbeth, in the tragedy of that name, commits ſo many horrid crimes, that it might very well happen, that a perſon who had not appeared in the play might make an attempt upon his life, in order to revenge ſome particular injury; it is probable alſo, that Macduff, whoſe whole family had been butchered by the tyrant's orders, might conſpire with the accuſed princes, in order to wreak his vengeance on the head of his enemy. But of theſe two cataſtrophes, both natural and probable, Art chooſes the ſecond, as it reſults from the tenor of the piece, and naturally grows out of it; and abſolutely excludes the ſecond, which is taken from what ſeems foreign to it. Hence we may lay down

down this general rule, which ſhould never admit of any exception. It is without doubt pleaſing to ſee an action which contains in itſelf the ſeeds of its own cataſtrophe, but imperceptible and hidden from the view; and, which being diſentangled, by little and little, and without any foreign aſſiſtance, at laſt produces the Denouement. For almoſt the ſame reaſon, Art has thought fit, that all theſe ſeeds of the concluſion ſhould be included in the firſt act, that all the perſons ſhould appear in it, or that mention ſhould be made of them; and, yet it is evident, that according to the natural courſe of things, perſons who had no ſhare in the beginning of an adventure, might very well come to take part in the concluſion. But by means of this regulation of Art, the piece forms a whole more agreeable to conſider, becauſe it has more ſymetry; that it is of a piece with itſelf, and more compact and round. Here follows another reaſon, but more general: If pieces were unravelled by ſomething foreign, or by perſons

perſons that had not been known at the beginning, the neceſſity in which the poet would be in to find a cataſtrophe, and the difficulty of finding one, would be too apparent. It may, indeed, be objected, that Richmond, in Richard the Third, as altered by Cibber, does not appear till the laſt act; but it is eaſily anſwered, that the cataſtrophe of this piece being univerſally known from hiſtory, the obſervation of the rule might reaſonably be diſpenſed with; yet, ſo far is Shakeſpear's practice conformable to reaſon, that moſt of his cataſtrophes are brought about by perſons that appear early in the piece; thus in Hamlet, Laertes appears in the firſt act; Macduff in Macbeth in like manner; the ſame holds with regard to Lear, Othello, and many others.

From the ſame ſource, are derived other rules or cuſtoms, that have as much importance as rules. Why ſhould not an actor that has no part in the drama, come to inform us of the ſubject, after the manner of the Chorus's of antiquity? Or,

why

why ſhould not the poet introduce in the firſt act, perſons, who diſcourſing of the ſubject, may give the audience ſome inſight into it, as Otway has done in the Orphan; this expedient is, without doubt, more dramatic than the other, and, yet it has been thought neceſſary to expunge that ſcene in the repreſentation? The reaſon is, that theſe methods appear too manifeſtly, to be introduced by the poet merely to anſwer his purpoſe. He ſhould not, if poſſible, appear to have had the compoſition of a piece in view. He ſhould, like a profound politician, conceal his own intereſt under the appearance of the public good, that it may not be poſſible to convict him of having had his own intereſt chiefly in view.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the Chorus of Antiquity.

WE ſhall conclude our obſervations upon tragedy, with an enquiry into the nature of the antient Chorus, ſince, as that conſtitutes the eſſential difference between the antient and modern tragedy, an account of the Chorus may be looked upon as an account of the tragedians of antiquity. It is univerſally known, that tragedy, in its origin, was only a ſacred hymn, ſung to the honour of Bacchus, by a Chorus of muſicians, and accompanied with dances; and, that by inſenſible degrees, the epiſodes, to which we give the appellation of acts, and which were recited by the players, found place between two ſongs of the Chorus. It is well known likewiſe, that tragedy has loſt its Chorus amongſt the moderns, as comedy had loſt them

them even before the age of Plautus: ſo, that many may be inclined to think, that a diſſertation upon the Chorus, is at preſent abſolutely unneceſſary in a treatiſe upon the ſtage; but, as Milton and Racine have made an attempt to revive them amongſt the moderns, and, as the ingenious Mr. Maſon has followed their example, in his two excellent Poems, of Elfrida and Charactacus, I apprehend, that it is abſolute neceſſary to conſider their conſequence in this place, and to diſcuſs the point, Whether they ſhould take place on the modern ſtage, as the Chorus was the *Primum Mobile* of the antient tragedy; the foundation of the whole œconomy of the poem, and the baſis of all its rules? But let us not repeat here, without an abſolutely neceſſity, what may be found in Latin, Italian and French authors, and even in Scaliger, who has omitted nothing but the definition, though from that ſpring all the difficulties which we meet with in this ſubject. To take the Chorus then, not as it was before the age of Theſpis,

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when he alone compoſed an entire tragedy, becauſe that would be unneceſſary; but to conſider it as it was in the time of Sophocles and Euripides, when tragedy was arrived at perfection amongſt the Greeks, it may be defined in this manner. The Chorus, is a body of actors, repreſenting the aſſembly of thoſe who had met, or, who might probably have met at the place where the action repreſented upon the ſtage is ſuppoſed to paſs. Theſe words are of conſequence, and no body ſhould go beyond them, without having entered perfectly into their meaning; nor pretend to condemn them, without having thoroughly examined the antient tragic poets: for, it will appear evidently, that in the Hecuba of Euripides, the Chorus is compoſed of Trojan ſlaves, becauſe, it is more probable, that theſe perſons ſhould be preſent at the gate of the dwelling of Hecuba, their queen, then captive with them, than any others whatever. In the Antigone of Sophocles, it is compoſed of the old men of Thebes, becauſe, having been

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ſummoned to council by Creon, none but they could be reaſonably ſuppoſed aſſembled in a crowd before the king's palace. In the Ajax, they are the mariners of Salamis, who aſſemble with reaſon before the tent of their prince, upon hearing the report of his madneſs, in order to do him whatever ſervice might lie in their power. In the Prometheus of Æſchylus, the ſea-nymphs make up the Chorus, becauſe there was not the leaſt likelihood, that any other perſons ſhould happen to be near that unhappy wretch, bound faſt to a rock, far from the commerce of mankind. Finally, in the Seven Chiefs before Thebes, it conſiſts of the young girls of the city, becauſe it was more natural to aſſemble them before the palace, and make them ſtay there in terror, lamenting the diſtreſſes occaſioned by the war, than to have repreſented in the ſame ſituation men neceſſary to the defence of their country.

I ſhall not mention the tragedies, which go by the name of Seneca, becauſe, with reſpect to the Chorus, they are highly defec-

defective: for ſometimes they ſee every thing that paſſes upon the ſtage, hear every thing that is ſaid there, and ſpeak very much to the purpoſe upon their knowledge of the ſubject; and at other times they ſeem to be blind, deaf and dumb. In many of theſe pieces, it is hard to determine of what ſort of perſons they are compoſed; by what means they met together; what motive they have for coming upon the ſtage, when they enter or when they quit it; whether they are always preſent; what end they anſwer; nor, why they are rather of one condition, or ſex, than another; whence it proceeds, that the criticks, who have wrote commentaries upon this author, give them different names, or no names it all. It muſt, indeed, be acknowledged, that they are fine pieces of poetry, that they teem with ſhining thoughts; but then moſt of them might be retrenched, without altering either the ſenſe or deſign of the Poem. Thoſe beautiful reflections in the Troas upon the ſtate of the ſoul after death, may at once ſerve

to

to prove, that the poetry of theſe Choruſes, is as exquiſite, as improperly placed.

It is remarkable, that the Thebais has no Choruſes at all, whether it may have loſt them by the negligence of copyers and printers, which does not ſeem probable; for, in all likelihood, there would have remained ſome fragment, ſince there are pieces inſerted in ſeveral different parts of the body of the poem; or, whether the author might not have compoſed any; which inclines me to call in queſtion, what Scaliger and ſome others have advanced, that tragedy was never without a chorus: for, I have ſome reaſon to think, that in the debauched age of the emperors, when the Mimes and the Embolimes of Agathon, and buffoons were introduced as interludes, in tragedies as well comedies, the Chorus ceaſed by degrees, to make a part of the Poem, being now no more than a troop of muſicians and dancers, whoſe uſe was to mark the intervals of the acts. But Sophocles, Æſchylus, and Euripides, have been much more careful in the compoſition of the Chorus,

Chorus, than the author of the tragedies attributed to Seneca; as they underſtood much better than he the Art and Conduct of this ſpecies of poetry: from a peruſal of their works, we ſhall be convinced of the truth of what has been advanced above, that the Chorus might be compoſed of perſons of every kind, without diſtinction of age or ſex. When Ariſtotle and Scaliger, after him, name the Chorus, an indolent aſſiſtant, that affords only an unavailing benevolence to thoſe it comforts; this ſhould be underſtood merely with an eye to the other perſons of the piece, who are, generally ſpeaking, more active. Hence the Greek poets were never ſo injudicious, as to chooſe for their Choruſes idle perſons, who might, with ſome appearance of probability have been preſent at the true action upon the place repreſented by the ſcene; neither did they chooſe perſons who had no great intereſt in the event; becauſe, whatever they might have ſaid, or done, upon the ſtage, would have been weak and languiſhing; it being certain, that the

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ſpectators cannot bear in the body of a piece, perſons of no conſequence to the fable; and, it is for this reaſon, the Choruſes in thoſe tragedies that go by the name of Seneca produce ſo bad an effect, though filled with excellent moral ſentiments; becauſe, as it is often difficult to tell what ſort of people is repreſented by theſe Choruſes, and as they only moralize upon the events repreſented without having any intereſt in them; one cannot conceive why they ſhould appear, and make theſe florid diſſertations upon what no way concern them. It is requiſite, moreover, according to the precept of Horace in his poeticks, that the Chorus ſhould act likewiſe, beſides ſinging, in order to mark the intervals of the acts, and, that thoſe that compoſe it ſhould ſuſtain characters, that may appear to have a probable intereſt in the piece, promoting by their actions the buſineſs of the theatre like the other performers: and, no one will pretend to ſay, that actors ſhould be idle ſpectators. In order to be convinced

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of this truth, we have only to read the works of the antients, wherein the Choruſes not only repreſent perſons intereſted in the reality of the action, as the Salamanians in the Ajax Furens of Sophocles; but, who are ſometimes ſome of the principal perſonages, as the Princeſſes of Argos in the Suppliantes of Euripides; the night-guards in his Rheſeus, if indeed, that piece be his; the Trojan Ladies in his Troas; the Old Men of Thebes, in the Antigone of Sophocles, &c. But it is remarkable, that when the ſubject ſupplied the Chorus of itſelf, they never borrowed it elſewhere; thus in the Rheſeus of Euripides, the ſcene of which is before the tents of the generals of the Trojan army, and every thing paſſing during the night, the guards compoſe the Chorus; becauſe, probability did not permit other perſons to be aſſembled in ſuch a place on ſuch a time. If there was a ſufficient number of principal actors, the Chorus was compoſed of them, as in the Suppliantes of Euripides, the ſeven Princeſſes, who implore the aid

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of Theſeus, in order to inter their huſbands ſlain before Thebes, compoſe the Chorus of that tragedy.

This account of the Chorus may ſerve to ſhew why the dramatic poetry of the antients differs ſo much from that of the moderns. The antients ſeldom made uſe of ſoliloquies, becauſe the Chorus being always preſent, it was not probable, that a perſon could talk aloud of ſecret affairs without being heard by it. Again, they ſeldom repreſented a perſon dying upon the ſtage, becauſe it was equally improbable, that ſo many perſons ſhould ſtand by and ſee a prince aſſaſſinated, without interpoſing to aſſiſt him. The Chorus, moreover, laid the poet under a neceſſity of obſerving the continuity of the action; for, if it was to be interrupted, there could be no reaſon to imagine, that the Chorus which met merely on its account, ſhould continue upon the ſtage. It was this likewiſe, that made the obſervation of the Unity of Place inviolable with the antients; for ſince the Chorus was to continue upon the

the ſtage, from the beginning to the end of the piece, it could not, without a manifeſt abſurdity, be ſuppoſed to paſs from Europe to Aſia, from Thebes to Athens, *&c.* The Unity of Time as well as that of place, took its riſe from the Chorus; for, if the poet had given his tragedy the extent of a week, a month, or a year, how could he have made the ſpectators believe, that ſo many perſons, who had not diſappeared for a moment, had paſſed all that time, without his ever ſeeing them eat, drink, or ſleep? Hence it follows, that the Unities ſo rigorouſly inſiſted upon by the critics, were obſerved by the antients only becauſe the Chorus made them neceſſary; and, that the moderns may be allowed to diſpenſe with them, ſince the invention of a variety of ſcenes makes the ſtrict obſervation of Unity of Place unneceſſary; and, ſince the intervals between the acts allow the poet whatever latitude he thinks proper, with regard to Time. The partizans of antiquity, however, have alledged ſomething in favour of the Chorus, which deſerves

ſerves to be conſidered: a modern dramatic poem, ſay they, repreſents an action; whereas, the antient dramatic poems repreſented that action as paſſing before ſpectators, a circumſtance which muſt undoubtedly double the effect.

Thus in painting, the figure of a Belliſarius aſking alms, would never ſtrike us, if repreſented alone, in as forcible a manner, as it does when accompanied with a group of aſſiſtant figures; a ſoldier, whoſe countenance expreſſes grief and conſternation at the downfal of ſo great a man; and a crowd of women, who compaſſionate his miſery, and relieve him with an alms. Thoſe who reaſon in this manner, ſhould have conſidered, that the caſe is not parallel; that the painter repreſents but a ſingle moment, and ſhould, conſequently, have recourſe to ſuch expedients to give variety to his object. Such a group of aſſiſtant figures, and the different paſſions expreſſed in their faces, ſerve to ſupply the want of ſucceſſion, and give a ſeeming extent to an action repreſented upon can-

vas. But a play, is a moving picture; its ſituations vary every moment; and, conſequently, thoſe aſſiſtant figures which increaſe the effect in painting, would upon the ſtage only perplex and diſtract the attention of the ſpectators. To confirm the truth of this obſervation, I have remarked, that at the tragedy of Hamlet, thoſe that give attention to the Mock-play, are diverted from obſerving what paſſes amongſt the real characters; and, that thoſe that conſider theſe latter with attention, ſcarcely take any notice at all of the Mock-play.

It has been farther alledged in favour of the Chorus, by thoſe, whoſe enthuſiaſm for antiquity, makes them look upon the nobleſt and moſt ſublime productions of modern poets, as lame and defective, that it affords an admirable opportunity of making moral and inſtructive reflections; but, who does not ſee how much theſe common place harangues of the Chorus muſt enervate a tragedy, giving it rather the air of a diſſertation of morality, thán a dramatic per-

performance? And, even when reflections are proper, muſt not they ſtrike us more in the mouths of the perſons of the Drama, as flowing from their characteriſtic qualities, than when delivered by the perſons who compoſe the chorus, who ſeldom have any other character, than that of cold and inſipid declaimers?

CHAP. XXIV.

Of Comedy in general, and in particular of the Italian.

TRAGEDY, which repreſents great events and elevated characters, has ſomething that dazzles and ſtrikes the ſpectators: Comedy, which borrows its images from ordinary life, though it does not make an equal impreſſion upon the young and unexperienced, generally affords a higher pleaſure to the judicious and diſcerning. I may, perhaps, be thought ſingular for aſſerting that, if the French ſtage deſerves to be preferred to the Engliſh, it is rather in Tragedy than Comedy. The only article they ſurpaſs us in is that of Regularity, and regularity of conduct is certainly leſs eſſential in a Comedy than a Tragedy. Moliere, 'tis true, has been juſtly extolled by the

the celebrated Monſ. de Voltaire, as the beſt comic writer of any nation; but Moliere is but one: were Congreve, Vanbrugh, Wycherly and Ben Johnſon to be put into the oppoſite ſcale, I believe an impartial judge would be puzzled to decide their comparative merits. It is true Moliere was a moſt prolific writer, and has compoſed almoſt as many good pieces as the authors above-mentioned; but the circumſtance of plays being wrote by one author or ſeveral, ſhould be of no weight in the compariſon.

We ſhall not enlarge here upon the Antient Comedy, as we agree entirely with a celebrated modern that, in order to enter into the humour of the comic writings of a nation, one ſhould have that knowledge of its manners and cuſtoms, which is to be acquired only by reſiding in it.

Menander, Ariſtophanes, Plautus, and Terence, are admired perhaps, more on account of their antiquity, than their real merit; of which, we who live in an age, in every reſpect ſo different from theirs, are, by no means, well qualified to judge. With regard to the

Italian Comedy, it can certainly never come in competion, either with the French or Engliſh; and the reaſon is obvious; Italian Comedies are not compoſed for the preſs; the Italian Comedians never learn a part by heart; and they are ſufficiently prepared when they have ſeen the ſubject of the piece a few minutes before they come upon the ſtage. The characters in their pieces are all ſo exaggerated, that they ſcarce retain any reſemblance to nature: Harlequin, whoſe character is that of a blundering ſervant, degenerates into a buffoon, whoſe miſtakes and drollery have little in common with real life. Scapin, an artful intriguing Valet deviates as much from truth and probability. The Doctor, a ſelf-ſufficient, prating pedant, is a Caricatura more out of nature than either of the former: and Pataloon, an avaricious citizen of Venice is not leſs groteſque and fantaſtic. In fine, theſe characters have as little ſimilitude to the real characters of men in Italy, as the habits worn by them have to the dreſs of the people of that country.

country. Dramatic Poetry, it is true, ſhould magnify objects as ſtatues are repreſented bigger than the life, that they may deſcend to the eye in their due proportions; but, then it ſhould not magnify them in ſuch a manner, as to ſtrain the eyes of the beholders. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that there is ſomething highly entertaining in that variety of incidents *& jeu de Theatre*, which the Italians diſplay in almoſt all their comedies; and ſo amuſing are theſe intrigues, that they pleaſe, notwithſtanding their improbability. The magical rings, which were endued with a property of making one perſon paſs for another, give riſe to ſo many diverting occurrences, that ſpectators are willing to pardon the extravagance of the conceit, on account of the pleaſure they receive from the incidents that grow out of it. The circumſtance of Harlequin's being taken by means of the ring for Mario, and laid claim to by two different ladies, who were in love with that gentleman, gives room for a ſcene, in which the

Vis comica; though, perhaps, carried a little beyond the bounds of nature, has a force capable of extorting a ſmile from a ſtoic. I cannot but be of opinion, that our Dramatic Writers might borrow very uſeful hints from Italian pieces: there is in all of them, a fruitful vein of invention, which is undoubtedly too exuberant; but, whoſe redundancies might be eaſily retrenched by a judicious imitator. There is often ſomething exquiſitely adapted to pleaſe the imagination in theſe plays, whoſe plots often turn upon magic. It ſeems probable, that Shakeſpear, whoſe Fancy was as pictureſque as that of an Italian, was led by a congenial ſympathy, to imitate their manner in the conſtruction of his Fables, and choice of his Subjects. Any one, that is acquainted with the Dramatic Repreſentations of Italy, will readily acknowledge, that the Tempeſt, Cymbeline, All's Well that Ends Well, Much Ado about Nothing, and As You Like It, are compoſed in a taſte very like the Italian; and diſcover

cover a ſtrong tincture of an Italian imagination throughout.

I ſhall cloſe this Chapter, by laying before the Reader, the intrigue of a celebrated Italian Comedy, called *La Vita e un Sogno*, Life's a Dream; as one ſuch example will ſuffice, to give a general idea of their manner of compoſition: A king of Poland, who had attached himſelf to the ſtudy of the occult ſciences, having diſcovered by caſting his ſon's nativity, that he was born to dethrone him, cauſed him to be confined in a tower, where he was permitted to ſee no-body but his keeper, and to which no-body was allowed to approach. Being however affected by the unhappy ſituation of his only ſon, he reſolves to bring him to court, and try his behaviour. For this end he orders the Prince's keeper to give him a potion which had power to throw him into a profound ſleep for ſome hours, during which time he is conveyed to the palace and wakes in great ſurprize at its magnificence and at ſeeing himſelf treated with all the reſpect due to

the heir-apparent to the crown. He, however, immediately diſcovers his tyrannical diſpoſition, throws Pataloon out of a window for only-telling him that he ſhould not ſpeak in the diſreſpectful manner he does to a certain Prince, and ubraids his father in the moſt outrageous terms for having kept him ſo long in confinement. The King, exaſperated hereat, by means of another potion, cauſes him to be carried back to his priſon, where upon awaking he is equally ſurpriſed to find himſelf in his former ſtate, and is puzzled whether to give credit to his keeper, who aſſures him that he had only dreamt that he had been at court, and that he was never once out of his priſon. The people, however, who were incenſed at this cruel treatment of their lawful Prince, make an inſurrection, force the priſon, and march, with their Prince at their head, againſt the King, who is ſubdued by his ſon and conſtrained to caſt himſelf upon his mercy. Thus the prediction is fulfilled, and the piece concludes by the Prince's reinſtating his father

and

and confining the il capo popolo, the chief of the rebels, who claimed the reward of his ſervices, to the ſame tower in which he had been himſelf impriſoned.

This ſpecimen may ſuffice to give the reader an idea of the fanciful turn of the Italians in the Conſtruction of their Fables.

CHAP. XXV.

An account of the moſt eminent Comic Writers of France and England.

ENOUGH has been ſaid in the laſt chapter concerning the Italian Comedy, which, though not without it's merit, can certainly never pretend to rival either the French or Engliſh. As we have already given general rules for compoſition in ſpeaking of tragedy, moſt of which may be applied to comedy, we ſhall at preſent, inſtead of proceeding in the didactick manner lay before the reader the characters of ſuch French and Engliſh authors as have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in Comedy.

Moliere, who muſt be allowed to be at the head of the French Comic Poets, has wrote more firſt-rate pieces than any Engliſh Comic Writer whatever. He has ſhone equally in genteel and low comedy; at once excelled in moral pieces and in farce. His Depit Amoureux, of which

Vanbrugh

Vanbrugh has given us a tranſlation almoſt literal, under the name of the Miſtake, is a maſterpiece of intrigue, as his Miſanthrope is a character drawn in ſo maſterly a manner that it atones for the want of a plot. With regard to this particular piece, however, we are entirely of the opinion of the celebrated Monſ. de Voltaire, who prefers the Plain-dealer of Wytcherly to it. Nothing in the Plain-dealer is taken from Moliere but the the hint of the play. The character of the Man-hater is ſo differently drawn by Mr. Wytcherly and Moliere that it cannot be looked upon as an imitation. That of Olivia has, indeed, a conſiderable reſemblance to the Fine Lady of the Miſanthrope, and this is the only character for which the Engliſh author ſeems indebted to the French. He has abundantly compenſated this by adding to his Plain-dealer the very particular that was wanting to the Miſanthrope of Moliere; *viz.* an intereſting and well-conducted intrigue. Nothing can be better calculated to raiſe an agreeable ſurprize in the ſpectators than the extraordinary

dinary manner by which Manly finds means to enjoy the falſe Olivia, and to wreak revenge on his perfidious friend. The School for Wives, an excellent comedy of Moliere's in three acts, furniſhed the hint, and ſome of the incidents of the Country-wife, an admirable comedy, which, with that above-mentioned, ſhould entitle this author to a place amongſt the firſt-rate Comic Writers of England. To have treated two of the ſame ſubjects with Moliere: to have ſurpaſſed him in the one, and equalled him in the other, is enough to immortalize Mr. Wytcherly, though his other comedies, the Gentleman Dancing-maſter, St. James's Park, or Love in a Wood, &c. are but mean performances.

The next piece of Moliere's which deſerves to be taken notice of, is the Tartuff, or Impoſtor, an excellent comedy, which throws the ſpirits of the ſpectators into an agitation almoſt equal to that excited by tragedy. The Non-juror of Cibber, which is a cloſe imitation of this piece, falls vaſtly ſhort of the force of the original. It ſeems

probable

probable that the hint of the character of Maſkwell, in the Double-dealer, was taken from this play rather than from that of Syrus in the Self-tormentor, though this laſt might have ſuggeſted the various ſtratagems made uſe of by Maſkwell which contribute ſo much to render the piece intereſting. This comedy may juſtly be looked upon as a maſter-piece for eaſe, elegance and ſpirit of dialogue; force and variety of natural character; and, above all, for plot, incident and intrigue. To extol the wit of this performance would be ſuperfluous, as the comic writings of Mr. Congreve are univerſally allowed to ſurpaſs the productions of all other authors in an exuberance of wit and ſhining thoughts. The only ſolid objection that can be made to the conduct of the Piece, is, that the ſoliloquies are too prolix, and that it is quite unnatural that Maſkwell ſhould in this manner make the pit his confidant: but this objection may as juſtly be made to many other plays, and, notwithſtanding

ſtanding the authority of the Duke of Buckingham, who cenſures this practice ſo ſeverely in his Eſſay on Poetry, we apprehend that it may plead Neceſſity in it's behalf, it being often impoſſible for a poet to avoid having recourſe to this expedient, which muſt certainly be acknowledged much more natural and reaſonable than that made uſe of by the French, who repreſent perſons of the moſt abandoned wickedneſs, ſuch as Cleopatra in Rodogune, Mathan in Athaliah, and many more, opening their minds, without the leaſt ſcruple or conſtraint, to their confidants. This is certainly a much more glaring abſurdity than the other. Who would not be ſtruck by the inconſiſtency if Maſkwell was to diſcover his ſecret purpoſe to a friend? This would ſeem ſtill more improbable than his talking alone.

Regnard is univerſally allowed by the French to be their next Comic Writer to Moliere. His Comedy called Le Toueur muſt be acknowledged to be equal to any

tion of the kind whatever. The character of the Gameſter is taken from nature, and admirably ſuſtained throughout.

I ſhall here give the reader the Fable of this piece, ſince it is one of the moſt ingenious and well imagined that can be produced from any French comedy.

The Gameſter, whoſe predominant paſſion is for play, as the name of the character indicates, is in love with a young lady of fortune, who was intended for his wife by his father, and by whom he is beloved to ſuch a degree that, though ſhe knows he is addicted to gaming, ſhe ſhuts her eyes to that as well as to all his other faults. The father exerts his utmoſt endeavours to bring about his ſon's reformation, and haſtens the match. The young gentleman always finds his paſſion very ſtrong when his finances are low, but as ſoon as he is in caſh, he runs to the gaming-table, where Fortune proves as various with reſpect to him, as ſhe generally does with reſpect to the votaries of her fickle Godhead. His father often forgives him, and,

upon

upon promiſes of amendment, advances him money to pay his debts. His miſtreſs ſhews him equal indulgence, and, upon taking him into favour, makes him a preſent of her picture ſet round with diamonds. The gameſter, however, returns to his former practices, and, having at laſt loſt all his money, ſends for a pawn-broker, who poſitively refuſing to advance him any money without a valuable pledge, he at laſt is reduced to pawn his miſtreſs's picture. He plays again, and loſes as before. In the mean his wedding-day approaches. He goes with all the tranſport of a lover to his miſtreſs's houſe, where his father was preſent and another gentleman who had courted the young lady unſucceſsfully, and, though he had her waiting-woman in his intereſt, ſaw his rival conſtantly preferred to him, ſo that he at laſt deſiſted from his ſuit and continued to viſit the lady on the footing of a friend. Madame la Reſource, the pawnbroker, happening to go to the houſe, the lady had ſeen her picture with her, and being then convinced of the perfidy of her

lover,

lover, ſhe took the picture from Madame la Reſource and put it into the hands of his rival, who promiſed to be accountable for it. When the gameſter arrives, ſhe tells him before all preſent, that ſhe had reſolved to give her hand to the man to whom ſhe had given her picture, whereupon the gameſter makes a ſhew of looking for it, and not finding it threatens to kill his ſervant, aſking him, with a counterfeited fury, what he had done with it. The ſervant, to help out his maſter, tells him that he was ſo ſtruck with the repreſentation of the lady's beauty, that he had given her picture to a painter, for two or three days, in order to have it copied. Upon this the other gentleman produces the picture, and the lady gives him her hand. The gameſter's father burſts out into invectives againſt his ſon, and declares his reſolution to diſinherit him. The gameſter being left in this diſtreſsful ſituation, his ſervant offers to quit the ſtage; whereupon he aſks whether he has reſolved to abandon him too. No, Sir, replies the

ſervant,

ſervant, I am only going into the library for Seneca to conſole you, by reading a chapter of his works. This laſt circumſtance alludes to a foregoing ſcene, wherein the gameſter, having loſt all his money, and being in the utmoſt deſpair, ſends his ſervant to look for a book, in order to amuſe him by reading it; the book which the ſervant brings is Seneca, which opens at a chapter concerning the contempt of riches.

We apprehend that Mrs. Centlivre's alteration of the cataſtrophe of this piece, is highly injudicious.

Regnard's concluſion is equally ſtriking, and much more natural. The circumſtance of the gameſter's loſing the picture to his miſtreſs in diſguiſe, is attended with a ſtriking abſurdity, viz. the impoſſibility of a lover's ſeeing and playing with his miſtreſs in diſguiſe, and not diſcovering her. The ſame objection may indeed be made to women diſguiſed in mens cloaths, in general; but this abſurdity has, by the complaiſance of ſpectators, acquired a degree

of

of authority, that privileges it from the cenſure of Critics.

But, to return to Regnard; his next beſt comedy to the Gameſter is the Heir le Legataire Univerſell. In this play, a young gentleman, whoſe whole hopes of a fortune depended upon his ſucceeding to a rich old uncle, labouring under a complication of diſorders; gets his man to perſonate this uncle on his death-bed, and to dictate a will to the notaries; this the doting old man is afterwards perſuaded to have been dictated by himſelf, and accordingly ſigns it. 'Twere to be wiſhed that this play, which ſeems ſo well calculated for the Engliſh ſtage, had fallen into the hands of ſomebody capable of doing juſtice to it; the Will and no Will, which was taken from it, is but a wretched copy of this truly-comic original. The other comedies of Regnard, that ſeem moſt worthy of conſideration, are Le Diſtrait, or the Abſent Man; an entertaining piece; in which a variety of ſingular and ſurprizing incidents ſpring from the abſence of mind of the perſon

perſon who ſuſtains the chief character. The hint of this play was taken from La Bruyere's characters and Les Menechemnes, a comedy, wrote upon the ſame ſubject with the Comedy of Errors of Shakeſpear; the various incidents ariſing from the exact reſemblance of two twin brothers. He has, beſides, compoſed ſeveral farces, in which Humour and Intrigue are equally conſpicuous. Le Retour Imprevu ſeems to be the moſt entertaining of theſe; 'tis repre ſented on the Engliſh ſtage by the name of The Intriguing Chambermaid; but the French piece muſt be allowed to ſurpaſs the Engliſh, in one particular; namely, that in the former, the intrigue is conducted by a footman, which is much more conformable both to Decency and Probability, than its being conducted by a ſervant-maid. To conclude, it muſt be acknowledged that theſe two maſters of comic poetry have conformed to nature, with the utmoſt exactneſs; and, it ſeems worthy of obſervation, that they ſtrongly reſemble each other, both in ſtile and in the choice of

ſub-

ſubjects, as well as the manner of treating them.

Of all our Engliſh comic writers, Vanbrugh ſeems to have the ſtrongeſt reſemblance in his manner, to that of Moliere and Regnard: 'tis well known that this author reſided a conſiderable time in France, where, upon his arrival, he was impriſoned in the Baſtile, though he was never able to learn how he had incurred that ſevere puniſhment. I ſhould not ſcruple to give this writer the preference to our other dramatic poets, were it not that moſt of his pieces are taken from the French: the Miſtake, as has been obſerved above, is a tranſlation of Le Depit Amoureux, the Amorous Quarrel, a play of Moliere's: the Confederacy is taken from D'Ancourt; and Æſop from Bourſault. However, the incomparable original plays which Sir John has given us, ſufficiently evince that, if he had recourſe to the French, 'twas th ough indolence, and not barrenneſs of invention. The Provok'd Wife, a comedy equal to the beſt for character, incident,

and

and eaſy dialogue: the Relapſe, an excellent piece, defective in nothing but the intrigue, a defect with which the beſt of Moliere's comedies may be equally reproached: and the Journey to London, as perfect a production as ever appeared upon any ſtage, prove that their author was poſſeſſed of a genius as creative as comic. With regard to the laſt-mentioned piece, it ſhould, indeed, be allowed, that the late Mr. Cibber has a claim to a ſhare of the honour of compoſing it; but, 'tis apprehended, that if Death had not ſtopt the hand of the author, he would have finiſhed it in as maſterly a manner as the Laureat. It is but juſtice to Cibber to ſay, that though the Careleſs Huſband is the only finiſhed piece of his compoſing, he underſtood the drama as well as any man of his time, and has done conſiderable ſervice to the ſtage, by reſtoring and adapting to it many plays, which, though poſſeſſed of a conſiderable fund of merit, would otherwiſe have been loſt.

To return to the French authors: they may boaſt, it is true, of a Pyrron, a Deſtouches, a Marivaux, and a Duboiſſy. No one that is acquainted with French literature, will deny, that La Metramonie, or the poetical madneſs, is one of the wittieſt comedies that ever was wrote; that Deſtouches has ſucceeded very well in genteel comedy, as his comedy called Le Glorieux, the Proud Man, ſufficiently proves; that Marivaux is poſſeſſed of a ſprightly fancy and fruitful invention; and that Duboiſſy's character of l'Homme du Tour ou les Dehors trompeurs, the Man of every Day, or the Deceitful Outſide, is a character truly original, and drawn in the moſt maſterly manner. But, when we confront theſe writers with an Addiſon and a Steel; the former of which has given us, in the Drummer, or Haunted Houſe, a comedy, juſtly admired, both for its humour and novelty; and, the later of whom has equalled Terence in the moral and ſerious ſpecies of comedy. Dryden, who, in the comic part of the Spaniſh Friar, has ſhewn

a genius for this kind of compoſition, perhaps not inferior to Moliere's, and who has given us an Amphytrion, which will be allowed by all good judges to be ſuperior to that of Moliere. Farquhar, whoſe characters are always taken from nature, and whoſe intrigues are as complicated as thoſe of an Italian comedy: together with Etheridge, Shadwell, and Centlivre; ſome of whoſe comedies are not without merit, will, we apprehend, readily acknowledge, that the notion which has been adopted by many of the French being ſuperior to the Engliſh in comedy, is a vulgar error advanced by pretending ignorance, and embraced by implicit credulity.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Of FARCE.

THO' we can by no means aſſent to the opinion of thoſe who prefer the French comedy to the Engliſh, it is but juſtice to own, that their petites pieces, or farces, are vaſtly ſuperior to ours. They are poſſeſſed of an infinite number of pieces of three, two, or one act, which afford the higheſt entertainment to the ſpectators, either by means of their humour, their incidents, or ingenious and well-imagined allegory.

WE ſhall mention only ſome of the moſt known and popular; as Le Grondeur, or, The Snarler; and l'Avocat patelin, or, The Sham Lawyer; concerning which M. de Voltaire has declared it as his opinion, that they will ſubſiſt as long as there

is a ſtage in France; and that they have more merit than all the farces of Moliere. We can by no means ſubſcribe to this judgment: George Dandin, the fable of which was taken by Moliere from the Decameron of Boccace, ſeems greatly to ſurpaſs the two pieces above-mentioned. Mr. Betterton has borrowed the moſt intereſting part of his Amorous Widow, or Wanton Wife, from this farce. Les preciuſes ridicules, which expoſes the romantic affectation of two country ladies, can, it is apprehended, be by no means looked upon as inferior to the above-named farces.

The farces of Moliere are ſo generally known, that it is unneceſſary to mention any more of them. There is one ſpecies of farce in France, in which there is a character whoſe humour ſeems to be almoſt carried to buffoonry, the character I mean is that of Criſpin, a droll valet, raiſed above nature, like the Harlequin of the Italians. This perſonage, when repreſented by a good performer, never fails to divert the ſpectators highly. There are many

many little pieces, in which Criſpin is the moſt ſtriking object: for example; Criſpin Medicin, which is repreſented with ſome alterations upon our ſtage, under the title of the Sham Doctor; Le Deuil, the Mourning; Criſpin Rival des von Maitre; Criſpin his Maſter's Rival; and many more.

D'ANCOURT, who ſcarce compoſed any thing but farces, has enriched the French ſtage with ſeveral works, in which nature, humour, and invention are equally conſpicuous. En les Fees, the Fairies, we find a moſt amuſing ſtrain of fancy, attended with a copious fund of pleaſantry. In Les Trois Couſines, The Three Couſins, we find the naiveté of a country village painted exactly after nature; the picture of a country wedding by Reubens does not bear a more ſtriking reſemblance. The ſubject of this piece is as follows: An old woman, who owns a mill, and is in pretty good circumſtances, has three marriageable girls under her care, whom ſhe endeavours to keep unmarried as long as

can, in order to keep all the gallants to herſelf: the three couſins, however, have three lovers, who make balls and merry-meetings in appearance, for Madame la Meuniere, but in reality for her wards. Having amuſed her for ſome time in this manner, they are at laſt married by means of a pretended pilgrimage; on which, all the young perſons of the village were to go in a body. The piece is interſperſed with eaſy ſongs and familiar tunes, which contribute greatly to enliven the entertainment.

It is unneceſſary to mention La Pariſienne, as Mr. Garrick's Miſs in her Teens is, in a great meaſure, taken from it. It would require almoſt a volume to enumerate all the entertaining farces upon the French ſtage. We can, it muſt be acknowledged, produce very few good ones on the Engliſh: The Devil to Pay, the Duke and no Duke, and a Woman's Revenge, or a Match in Newgate, ſeem to be the moſt tolerable.

Mr.

Mr. Garrick has, indeed, given us four or five compoſed altogether in the French taſte; and which, though they take the place of farce, can hardly be called ſo, becauſe they anſwer all the ends of comedy, commixing uſe with entertainment. One of our modern authors has alſo given us pieces juſtly entitled to the name of farce, and which deſerve to be diſtinguiſhed from the heap of wretched little pieces which have appeared for ſome years paſt, though they can by no means be looked upon as maſter-pieces in this ſpecies of compoſition. It will be eaſily perceived, without my naming them, that the author I have in view is Mr. Foote. The farces compoſed by this gentleman at leaſt please upon the ſtage, and that entitled the Man of Taſte has ſome real merit.

Having thus conſidered the comparative merits of the French and Engliſh with regard to farce, we ſhall cloſe this chapter with an account of the progreſs it

has made on the Italian theatre. The Italians, who have a natural turn to buffoonry, and excel in all ſorts of grimace and attitude have ſo far ſurpaſſed all other nations in theſe branches of the drama, that a company of Italian comedians was received at Paris, and admired by all ranks of people to ſuch a degree that when they were baniſhed for playing La Fauſſe Prude, which reflected upon Madame de Maintenon, the regret of the public was inexpreſſible, as they looked upon the Italians to be the greateſt ornaments of the comic ſtage. They received, however, ſome conſolation from a collection of farcical pieces, that had been repreſented on the Italian ſtage, which was publiſhed in ſix volumes by Gherardi, a comedian. It muſt be allowed, that the dialogues of this collection, which, with a refined and delicate ſatire, diſcover a perfect knowledge of the manners of the age, and are filled with new and happy turns of expreſſion. The approbation of

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ſo judicious a critic, as M. de Saint-Evremont is a ſtrong proof of their merit.

In theſe farces, the Italian comedians were obliged (in order to conform to the taſte and underſtanding of the major part of the audience) to inſert a great deal more French than Italian, and they were called by the authors French pieces adapted to the Italian ſtage. This practice has ſince been followed by ſeveral eminent French authors, and nothing can be more ingenious than the pieces compoſed in the Italian taſte by M. de Marivaux and M. de Liſle: the Harlequin Sauvage of the latter is a character that ſhews a moſt admirable creative genius in the author. Harlequin being brought over from ſome barbarous country by an European merchant, and being intirely uninſtructed in the manners and cuſtoms of a civilized country, commits a thouſand extravagancies, which are highly entertaining, and always ſerve to convey a moral.

To return to the collection of Gherardi, thoſe that are curious in the Italian language, will find ſcattered up and down in it ſeveral ſcenes entirely Italian, and others half Italian and half French, as they were played; with this only difference, that the doctor and harlequin do not ſpeak therein the jargon of Bologna and Bergamo, becauſe readers would find it difficult to underſtand them. In fine, theſe little pieces are as complete farces as the Italian pieces, in imitation of which they were compoſed. Theſe French ſcenes repreſented upon the Italian theatre, were the works of ſeveral perſons of wit and genius, and were for the moſt part beſtowed to the players, by whom they were inſerted in their ſtock-plays. All Paris admired them whilſt they were played, and all Paris regretted them after they were diſcontinued.

To illuſtrate ſtill farther the genius of the Italians for farce, their comic operas, or burletta's, ſhould be taken into conſideration: theſe may be looked upon as ballad-

ballad-farces; and, when ſupported by an animated and pictureſque repreſentation in the performers, and accompanied by muſic ſuited to the action, cannot fail of making a laſting impreſſion even on thoſe who are entirely ignorant of the Italian language.

We ſhall cloſe this chapter, by ſaying a word or two concerning pantomimes, or harlequin entertainments, againſt theſe theatrical bigots (if I may be allowed the expreſſion) who have long ſince brought a heavy charge, becauſe they convey no moral, and ſerve only to efface the impreſſion made upon the mind by an elegant comedy; or a fine tragedy. Theſe objections might as juſtly be made againſt almoſt every ſpecies of farce, as moſt little pieces are intended merely to amuſe, and are ſeldom or ever intended to convey a moral, or inſtruct. This rule, however, admits of ſome exceptions; Lethe, the Toy-ſhop, and ſome other Engliſh farces, and all the allego-

gorical little pieces of the French are at once amuſing an inſtructive. But, to convey inſttuction, is not the chief deſign of farce; and, whilſt pantomimes, by means of their machinery, decorations, muſic, and dancing, contribute to the entertainment of the ſpectators, we can ſee no reaſon for rejecting them, though Mr. Pope, in his Dunciad, has ſo ſeverely cenſured them and the managers of his time for countenancing them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Of OPERAS.

THE Italian operas have been ſo ſeverely cenſured, that it will certainly ſeem an ill-judged and extravagant attempt to endeavour to vindicate them. The celebrated Mr. Addiſon, who, notwithſtanding his extenſive reputation, was by no means infallible, either in criticiſm, or any other ſubject, ſeems to have groſly miſrepreſented Italy in general, and the Italian operas in particular. His book of Travels into Italy, appears to be the work of a pedant, whoſe mind was ſo engroſſed by ancient Italy, that modern Italy eſcaped his obſervation. It conſiſts almoſt wholly of citations from the claſſic authors, whoſe deſcriptions of promontaries, rivers, woods, and towns, he has tranſcribed with great care; but thoſe who look for a juſt account

count of the policy, manners, or literature of Italy in this work, will find themſelves greatly diſappointed.

Mr. Addiſon, in thus vilifying the Italians, among whom learning was reſtored in Europe, and who are not inferior to any nation, ancient or modern, either in arts or ſciences, ſeems to have followed the example of his pedantic acquaintance Boileau, who, to uſe an expreſſion of his own, was tout heriſſé de Grec, tout bouffi de Latin. He has inſulted Taſſo, one of the greateſt poets the world ever produced, in that well-known verſe:

Et le clinquant du Taſſe a tout l'or de Virgile.

To this judgment Mr. Addiſon has ſubſcribed, telling us, that he prefers a ſingle verſe of Virgil to all the tinſel of Taſſo. Not contentented with running down the Italian authors he has likewiſe declared againſt their muſic, which has always been allowed, by the unanimous ſuffrage of Europe,

rope, to ſurpaſs that of all other nations. His objections to the opera are trivial and common, ſuch as the abſurdity of tranſacting common affairs by muſic; the tendency of muſic to enervate the minds of men, and the extravagancies of the repreſentation.

With regard to the firſt, we might as well object to tragedy, becauſe the perſons of the drama expreſs themſelves upon the commoneſt occaſions in blank verſe, and in an elevated ſtile. This objection appears to be as frivolous as that of ſome Engliſhmen, to the French tragic poets, nothing, according to theſe profound critics, can be ſo unnatural as a converſation carried on in rhime. Such connoiſſeurs have not diſcernment enough to perceive, that what is adapted to the genius of one language may be contrary to the genius of another; and, that rhime verſe, which produces ſo bad an effect in an Engliſh tragedy, is ſo eſſential to French tragedy, that it could not ſubſiſt without it. This is

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evident from experience, rhyme could not take upon the Engliſh ſtage, notwithſtanding all the efforts of Dryden, Lee, and Otway to maintain it, nor could a French tragedy ever ſucceed without it, though M. de la Motte wrote an Œdipus in proſe; and other authors have endeavoured to introduce blank verſe.

With regard to the ſecond objection, of the tendency of muſic to enervate the minds of Fngliſhmen, and deprive them of that heroic ſpirit, which has made them ſo formidable to the reſt of Europe, it ſeems to be a ſchool-boy's prejudice, poor pedantic common-place, ſuggeſted by a known paſſage in Plato de Republicâ. Such pitiful reaſoning appears to be fully anſwered, by the great and glorious ſucceſſes of the Britiſh nation, in an age when operas were never encouraged with greater liberality and munificence.

With reſpect to the abſurdities in the repreſentation, it is apprehended, that Mr. Addiſon

Addiſon has been guilty of a little exaggeration; his raillery concerning the lion, the ſparrows from which the heads of the audience were in danger, &c. is altogether flat and inſipid, as devoid of probability as true humour, and more worthy of the author of the Gray's-Inn Journal than the Spectator. However, allowing that there might have been ſome extravagance in the decorations of operas at that time, they are no longer liable to that objection being conducted with a decency equal to their magnificence.

It has often been urged againſt Italian operas, that the pieces themſelves are mean performances, compoſed merely for the ſake of the muſic, without either genius or accuracy. It muſt be allowed, that there are many, which are by no means finiſhed pieces; yet, even theſe are not ſo deſpicable as the antagoniſts of the Italian opera repreſent them. In the ſongs, there are many pretty thonghts; and, if they were adequately rendered in Engliſh verſe,

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I make no doubt, but they would meet with many admirers, even among thoſe who are ſo ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed againſt operas.

THE dramatic pieces of Metaſtaſio, which are compoſed pretty nearly in the manner of the ancient tragic poets, and with the moſt exact obſervation of the unities, muſt be allowed to be poems of a merit not inferior to that of the productions of Sophocles, Æſchyclus, and Euripides. Apoſtolozeno, who has compoſed, in the ſame taſte, is by many thought to rival Metaſtaſio.

IN fine, the Italian opera, when it at once unites the beauties of poetry, the grace of action, the magnificence of habits, the pomp of decorations, and the charms of muſic, muſt be allowed to be the moſt exquiſite of all dramatic entertainments.

It ſeems highly probable, that the exhibition of the ancient Greek and Roman tragedies, was much the ſame with that of the modern Italian operas, as the choruſſes always ſung; and, even the remainder of the piece was chaunted in a ſort of recitative.

The learned Abbé de Condillac, in his Traité ſur l'Origine des Connoiſſances Humaines, has proved with great erudition, that the dialogue, both of the ancient comedy and tragedy was a ſpecies of recitative.

To return to the Italian operas: as thoſe of the tragic kind give a high and elevated pleaſure, ſo thoſe of a comic nature, afford a moſt agreeable amuſement; and, the vivacity of the Italian muſic ſeems peculiarly adapted to farce, as the action of their performers, who excel all others in attitudes, agility, and the art of expreſſing the paſſions by the face, is equally calculated for ſuch repreſentations.

ANOTHER circumſtance, that greatly contributes to enhance the merits of theſe pieces is, that Pergoleſi, the greateſt muſician of Italy, has compoſed the muſic for moſt of them. The beſt of theſe pieces are Berl.ldo in Corte, Gli Artiſani Arrichti, La Serva Padrona, Viaggiatori, &c.

IT may be proper here to ſay a word of the French opera; the French, who, with an inſupportable vanity, arrogate every ſort of merit to themſelves, have even pretended to rival the Italians in muſic: however, the unanimous ſuffrages of the reſt of Europe have decided the diſpute in favour of the latter. About three years ago there was a warm conteſt at Paris, concerning the comparative merit of the French and Italian muſic; upon which occaſion M. Rouſſeau of Geneva, in a letter upon the ſubject, decried the former with all that vehemence and bitterneſs which is natural to him, and gave an unlimited preference to the latter. It is apprehended,

prehended, however, that though he was right in the main, he carried his partiality too far, when he aſſerted, that it was impoſſible for the French, from the nature of their language, to have any muſic at all. His own opera, entitled Le Divin du Village, the muſic of which he himſelf compoſed, is an eminent proof of the contrary: the muſic of this piece, which is moſt exquiſitely adapted to the words, does not ſeem to be inferior to the compoſition of any Italian maſter. The muſic compoſed by M. Mondonville, for his own opera of Titon et l'Aurore is likewiſe very maſterly: every body that has heard the air which it begins with, Votre cœur aimable aurore, will allow, that nothing can ſurpaſs it in ſoftneſs.

Some airs of Deſtouches, particularly in an opera, called, Les Elements, diſcover a conſiderable ſhare of genius. It muſt be owned, that theſe compoſers, who were at once poets and muſicians, had a great advantage over thoſe who are muſicians

cians only, as they could at pleaſure adapt the muſic to the words of their pieces. It muſt be alſo allowed, that the French minuets are excellent, perhaps ſuperior to thoſe of any other nation. The king of Pruſſia, whoſe taſte in all the arts and ſciences equals his courrge and conduct, admits of no other in the muſical entertainments repreſented before him; and certainly, the ſuffrage of ſo good a judge, ſhould bias us greatly in their favour.

The French muſic, however, is ſo far from being the rival of the Italian, that it ſeems upon the whole to be inferior even to the Engliſh. The latter has more variety and ſprightlineſs, and comes much nearer the vivacity of the Italian muſic.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of the effects of dramatic repreſentations on the minds of men.

THE ſtage has, in all nations and ages, been looked upon in a bad light by men of rigid principles. It ſeems therefore, that an enquiry into the ſource of this general prepoſſeſſion, would be at once both curious and uſeful. The character of a player has been conſidered as diſhonourable in all countries, except Greece alone, where generals, governors of towns, and perſons of the firſt rank, often performed upon the ſtage. It is hard to aſſign the reaſon for this unaccountable prejudice. It does not ſeem probable, that it is owing to the immorality of the ſtage, ſince it is no where ſtronger than in France, which may juſtly boaſt, that its theatre is the moſt chaſte and moral in Europe; the

tho', in other reſpects, it is at leaſt equalled by the Engliſh. Notwithſtanding morality is perhaps much better preached in France on the ſtage, than in the pulpit, theatrical entertainments, have in that country been looked upon in as bad a light by religioniſts, as they were in this in the fanatical age of Cromwell.

M. Bossuet, the famous biſhop of Meaux, has paſſed a general cenſure upon all the French tragedies, Penelope alone excepted, as having a tendency to inflame the paſſions. The tragedy, in favour of which he has made this exception, was wrote by the Abbé Geneſt, author of ſeveral exploded pieces, and is one of the coldeſt and moſt inſipid plays in the French language. The Janſeniſts, whoſe principles are very rigid and confined, condemn the ſtage as impious, and none of the ſect is to be ſeen at the play-houſe, except at the repreſentation of the Polieucte of Corneille; a piece which turns upon a martyrdom and a converſion by the influence of efficacious grace. That France is the only

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Chriſtian country where players are excluded Chriſtian burial till they renounce the ſtage at death.

Moliere himſelf could not obtain a burying-place without the interpoſition of the great, which drew from his wife that emphatical exclamation, Comment on refuſe un tombeau a un homme a qui on devroit elever des autels, What! muſt a man who deſerves altars, be refuſed a tomb? How inconſiſtent with that politeneſs which characteriſes the French nation, muſt it appear that Mademoiſelle la Comreur, ſhould be buried by the river ſide, by people who did it through mere compaſſion, becauſe her death happened in ſuch a manner, that ſhe had not time to renounce the ſtage. This actreſs, who is reckoned the beſt that France was ever poſſeſſed of, as well as one of the fineſt women of her age, was a favourite miſtreſs of the late Marſhal Saxe, who had abandoned the Ducheſs of Boulogne for her. In playing Phædra in Mr. Racine's

tragedy of that name, ſhe applied the following lines to the ducheſs her rival.

Je ne ſuis point de ſes femmes hardies,
Qui goutant dans le crime une tranquille paix
Ont ſcu ſe faire un front qui ne rougit jamais.

THIS was ſo highly reſented by the ducheſs, that ſhe had recourſe to poiſon for revenge. Mademoiſelle La Couvreur being thus diſpatched ſuddenly, and without having renounced the ſtage, would have been thrown upon a dunghill, had not ſome gentlemen carried her privately to the river-ſide, and there buried her as has been obſerved above.

NOTHING can be more inconſiſtent and contradictory than the treatment which players receive in France. Though the profeſſion is ſtigmatiz'd in ſo ſevere a manner, thoſe that are any way eminent in it, are received with reſpect in all companies, and highly careſſed by perſons of the firſt quality.

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The ingenious M. la Bruere has a pretty obſervation upon this conduct: Players, ſays he, were in high eſteem amongſt the Greeks; by the Romans they were looked upon as deſpicable; we think of them like the Romans, and behave to them like the Greeks. Why players ſhould be looked upon in a bad light in France, where plays, if not calculated to promote the cauſe of virtue, are never made ſubſervient to the intereſt of vice, is a point not eaſy to be determined.

The profeſſion of a player may, with much more reaſon, be looked upon as ſcandalous in England, where comic poets, not content to repreſent vice, uſe their utmoſt efforts to inculcate it. They have not only drawn vicious characters, but drawn them as models to be imitated by the ſpectators. The gentlemen drawn by Vanbrugh, Wycherly, and Etheridge, are all abandoned profligates, and ſome of them downright villains. Yet their characters are ſet in ſuch a point of light, that they will always

be looked upon by common audiences, as models of gentility and politeneſs.

Mr. Congreve, who, though born in Yorkſhire, was educated in Ireland, has made all his fine gentlemen knaves and coxcombs. Sharper, in the Old Batchelor, ſeems to have been intended by the author for the character of a very pretty gentleman, yet we find that his character anſwers perfectly to his name. The ſtratagem he makes uſe of to trick Sir Joſeph out of a hundred pounds, is little better than picking his pocket; and his kicking the perſon he had thus cheated, is an action every way worthy of a gentleman, ſince we may apply to gentlemen the character given of Achilles by Horace, Jura negat ſibi nata. Bellamour and Vain-love, who keep company with this raſcal, do not ſurpaſs him in their morals; their characters being made up of pride, perfidy, and a malignant and diabolical temper, that takes pleaſure in doing evil for evil ſake. Mirabel, in the Way of the World, is manifeſtly

feſtly intended for the model of a compleat fine gentleman, and has undoubtedly been but too often copied as ſuch by ſpectators, who find vice ſuited to their parts; yet he is as great a villain as Fain-all, whom he over-reaches. Careleſs, in the Double Dealer, is a worthleſs young fellow, or worſe; and Valentine, in Love for Love, an irreclaimable ſpendthrift.

It muſt indeed be acknowledged, that Mr. Congreve has made an attempt, in one of his plays, to draw the character of a young man of virtue. Mellefont, in the Double-Dealer, is repreſented as ſuch; it is remarkable, however, that this character is quite inconſiſtent, and has not the leaſt reſemblance to any character in nature. It is no more like a real character than a figure drawn with chalk upon a door is like a human face. This author's failing in drawing a good character, whilſt he ſucceeds ſo well in drawing bad ones, would induce one to think, that he drew the characters of his fine gentlemen from himſelf.

It is apprehended, that plays of this nature, in which characters, fundamentally vicious, are drawn as models worthy of being copied, have a much more pernicious tendency than thoſe whoſe immorality lies in the obſcenity of particular expreſſions. There is as much bawdy in the Æſop of Sir John Vanbrugh, as in any play upon the Engliſh ſtage; yet, are the characters drawn in ſuch a manner, that the ſcope of the whole is moral and inſtructive.

In Dryden's Amphytrion there are many very looſe expreſſions, yet it does not ſeem probable that the pleaſantry of this comedy can ever have a bad effect upon the morals of men. 'Tis the general tendency of a piece that is dangerous, and not particular expreſſions here and there. Had the French writers drawn ſuch characters as Congreve, Vanbrugh, Wytcherly, Etheridge, &c. the philoſopher of Geneva would have reaſon to decry the ſtage, as calculated to corrupt the morals of men.

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THE capital defect of our Engliſh comedies with regard to morality is, that in them vice is treated lightly inſtead of being repreſented in ſuch ſhocking colours as would be of force to raiſe averſion and diſguſt in the ſpectators.

OUR dramatic writers ſeem to have made it their buſineſs to familiarize their audiences to vice, and we need make no doubt that the immorality of the ſtage has greatly contributed to that univerſal depravity of manners which is but too viſible amongſt all ranks of people. Mr. Pope has finely obſerved that

Vice is a monſter of ſo frightful mien
As, to be hated, needs but to be ſeen;
But ſeen too oft, familiar with her face,
We firſt endure, then pity, then embrace.

THE objection that has been moſt frequently made againſt our dramatic writers is, that they encourage lewdneſs; but I think a much ſtronger objection might be

made againſt them for repreſenting perfidy, cruelty, and a malignant diſpoſition that takes delight in doing men all the miſchief that can be done with impunity, as ſhining qualities and characteriſticks of the fine gentleman. All theſe monſtrous vices are in moſt of our comedies repreſented as foibles, and the baſeſt actions are committed without ſcruple, and as it were in jeſt. This is the readieſt way that can be imagined to corrupt the manners of a people, who, when they ſee vice repreſented in this familiar light, no longer regard it with that horror which alone has power to preſerve them from running into it.

TACITUS tells us that the ancient Germans owed their purity of manners entirely to their looking upon vice with horror, and never conſidering it in a ludicrous manner or as a proper ſubject of laughter. Inter illos nemo vitia ridet nec corrumpere et corrumpi ſæculum vocatur.

SIR

SIR Richard Steel and Mr. Addiſon have done great ſervice to the ſtage, by ſtrictly adhering to decency and morality in their plays, which, tho' inferior to ſome others of our comic writers, deſerve to be preferred to them upon this account. Cibber's plays are in general pretty free from this defect; however, his comedy of Love's laſt Shift, or the Fool in Faſhion, appears very exceptionable; the characters of Loveleſs and Worthy are certainly very bad models, and yet the light in which they are placed ſhews that they were intended for imitation.

NOTHING can be more diſhonourable to the Engliſh nation than a compariſon of the characters of gentlemen in French plays with the ſame characters in our own; in the former they are amiable and exempt, at leaſt, from groſs faults; in the latter they are generally compoſed of all the worſt ingredients that can enter into human nature.

Upon the Engliſh ſtage, vice generally comes off triumphant; on the French ſtage, 'tis always ſtigmatized and puniſhed. Thus in Duboiſſy's comedy entitled L'Homme du jour ou les dehors trompeurs, the principal perſonage, who is a man of the world, that under an external appearance of politeneſs conceals treachery, diſhoneſty and hardneſs of heart (the uſual character of a fine gentleman in Mr. Congreve's comedies) is at the cloſe of the piece ſupplanted in an amour by a concealed rival whom he, not knowing him to be ſuch, had adviſed to make no ſcruple of betraying his friend when love was in the caſe.

In L'Homme a bonnes Fortunes, the chief character of which is a vain young man who makes love to ſeveral women at once, the ſame poetical juſtice is obſerved. In fine, vice is repreſented on the French ſtage; on the Engliſh it is inculcated. 'Tis a melancholy conſideration that the ſtage, which has a more powerful influence over

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the minds of men, than even the pulpit itſelf, ſhould be thus perverted from its original intent, which was to inſtruct and pleaſe at the ſame time, and made to encourage debauchery by ſpreading corruption.

CHAP. XXIX.

Of the Art of ACTING.

WHAT has been ſaid of a poet, Poeta naſcitur non fit, that he muſt be born ſuch, for a poetical vein is not to be acquired; ſeems to be ſtill more applicable to a player. I do not know an art in which men ſeldomer improve; and I believe it will be found a juſt obſervation, that he who is not a great player the firſt day he treads the ſtage, ſeldom proves ſo after. We have, indeed, ſome inſtances of eminent performers who, when they firſt appeared upon the ſtage, gave no ſigns of that ſhining merit which they diſcovered afterwards.

THE example of Mrs. Oldfield is remarkable; that celebrated actreſs was ſo unſucceſsful in her firſt attempts that ſhe quitted the ſtage, and had not accident brought

brought her on it again (about two years after) it would have loſt the greateſt ornament it could ever boaſt. It ſeems probable, however, that theſe accidents are rather owing to timidity and that anxiety of mind which young performers are ſeldom free from, than to want of abilities.

It muſt be acknowledged, that the deportment and the utterance are improveable, and that players who are now perfect in both, were very defective in them at firſt: But he who wants that which ſeems to conſtitute the theatrical genius, I mean ſenſibility and a power of expreſſing ſentiments and paſſions according to nature, may with reaſon deſpair of ever attaining it.

It follows from the maxim already laid down, viz. That a player muſt be born ſuch; that rules and precepts can be but of little uſe to men of this profeſſion. Nay, it is apprehended that an attention to them

may

may render an actor's performance ſtiff and conſtrained.

An actor's chief endeavour ſhould be to enter in ſuch a manner into the ſpirit of a part as to forget, in a great meaſure, that he is acting. As long as his mind is full of the idea of his acting a part, he will appear no better than an unnatural declaimer, his tones will not ſuit the paſſions he is to expreſs, and his geſtures will have no reſemblance to thoſe of a perſon in a ſituation like that he is ſuppoſed to be in.

It is ſaid of Hart and Mohun, that they declared they could never perform to their own ſatisfaction till they had forgot they were before an audience.

A player's declamation and geſtures that appear to be ſtudied, are as diſagreeable as affected manners in a real character. In fine, we look upon the maxim, Artis eſt celare artem. It is the perfection of art

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to conceal art as the baſis of all the precepts that may be given to actors. There is one abuſe in acting that calls loudly for a reformation, I mean declaiming in a ſtrain above nature, adopting a ſpecies of elocution on the ſtage, which is as far removed from common elocution as the recitative of an opera is from tragic declamation. This is ſtill more conſpicuous in France than with us; but there it ſeems unavoidable, as their pieces are all wrote in rhyme verſe. But the blank verſe in which our tragedies are compoſed, comes ſo near proſe that our declamation need not be ſtrained much beyond the pitch of common converſation. A proper dignity might be given to it without ſwelling it into a tympany, which has as little reſemblance to natural elocution as a voice magnified by a ſpeaking trumpet has to the ſame voice, when unaſſiſted by art.

An eminent player who quitted the ſtage ſome years ago, was remarkably de-

fective

fective in this particular. In the part of Cato, in which he met with general applauſe, he appeared to me to be a cold and inſipid declaimer: His elocution diſguſted me as much as the unnatural fuſtian of a modern tragedy.

Our Engliſh players in general, ſeem more defective in geſture than any other particular; the French greatly ſurpaſs them in the eaſe and dignity of their motions, as the Italians do in the variety and expreſſion of theirs.

Many are of opinion that a player, eſpecially a tragedian, ſhould have received a learned education; for my part, I cannot ſubſcribe to this opinion. 'Tis true, a player in tragedy ſhould have a tincture of learning, but a univerſity education generally gives an actor an aukward and ungainly deportment, that no acquiſition of knowledge can compenſate.

All

All thoſe who have ſeen Mr. Sheridan perform will readily own the truth of this remark: He was maſter of arts when he went upon the ſtage, and retained to the laſt that academical ſtiffneſs, which was remarked in him the firſt night he performed.

We have another ſtriking inſtance of this in Moſſop, though he has been ſeven or eight years upon the ſtage; his geſtures are as uncouth and ungraceful as when firſt he quitted the ſcholar's gown, to ſtrut and bellow in a ſhape and buſkins.

Aukwardness of geſture is a primary defect in a player, and indeed, ſuppoſes him deficient in the eſſential part of his profeſſion; for a performer who enters thoroughly into the ſpirit of his part, muſt of conſequence make uſe of geſtures which correſpond to the the emotions he is to expreſs. 'Tis true, theſe geſtures will be varied according to the different characters he repreſents.

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THE geſtures which accompany anger in a hero, for example, are not the ſame which accompany that paſſion in a clown; however, they are in the main of the ſame nature. The judicious performer from his obſervation of human nature knows how to expreſs the various degrees of paſſion by his geſtures, and at the ſame time to conform to the nature of the character he plays.

ABEL DRUGGER is agitated by hope and fear, and as much a prey to paſſion as any tragedy hero; but ſurely there ſhould be as great a difference between the manner of their expreſſing theſe paſſions by geſture as by tone of voice, and the player that can perform characters ſo oppoſite, with an expreſſion conformable to nature and truth, muſt be endowed with an uncommon ſhare of penetration. Boileau obſerves, with regard to the ſpecific nature of characters,

Une

Une parole la decouvre, un geſte la fait paroître,
Mais tout mortel n'a pas des yeux pour la con-
noître. Poetique.

A word, a careleſs geſture, may ſuffice
To ſhew the inmoſt ſoul to piercing eyes.

A QUICK diſcernment therefore, and a conſtant obſervation of nature are requiſite to form a perfect player. Monſieur du Freſnoy (in his Art of Painting) adviſes the young painter to ſtudy expreſſion, even in the faces of people paſſing to and fro in the ſtreet. The ſame advice may as properly be given to a player; he ſhould avail himſelf of every opportunity of remarking the changes which the workings of paſſion produce in the faces, voices, and geſtures of men; nay, he ſhould endeavour to acquire a habit of reflecting upon the manner in which paſſion operates upon himſelf. Whenever he perceives himſelf under the influence of any paſſion, he ſhould make a pauſe in order to conſider the manner in which it affected him; by making this his

con-

conſtant practice he will acquire a power of counterfeiting the paſſions on the ſtage, and maſtering them elſewhere: This laſt circumſtance is very material, ſince he can ſcarcely be able to ſtir the paſſions of an audience at will, that is unable to controul his own. Mr. Pope pays a fine compliment to an orator, when he ſays that he was at once maſter of the paſſions of his hearers, and of his own.

Lo, Windham, arm'd for freedom and the throne,
The maſter of our paſſions, and his own.

HAVING thus given ſome general preliminary obſervations upon the art of acting, we ſhall proceed according to the plan we have propoſed to follow, to conſider this art, as it is practiſed in thoſe nations where the drama has been cultivated with the greateſt care.

FROM

FROM a comparison of the different tastes in acting, which prevail in Italy, France and England, a judicious performer may acquire that general taste which always comes nearer to perfection than the local and confined taste of a particular country.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

Of the Italian Players.

WE ſhall begin with the Italian players, as they have a manner peculiar to themſelves. Their playing extempore gives them in ſome meaſure an advantage over the players of all other nations: The ſucceſs of an Italian comedy depends intirely upon the performers, who render it more or leſs diverting, according to the ſhare of wit which they have received from nature.

THE neceſſity which the Italians lie under of playing off hand, makes it very difficult to ſupply the place of a good comedian, when the company has the misfortune of loſing him: It is eaſy to find perſons who can learn a part by heart, and then repeat it upon the ſtage; but ſomething

thing more is requiſite to form an Italian comedian.

By a good Italian comedian is meant a man who has a conſiderable fund of knowledge; who plays rather from imagination than from memory; who compoſes all he utters; who knows how to ſecond the actor; who plays in concert with him; that is to ſay, one who ſo well adapts his words and geſtures to thoſe of the other performer, as to enter directly into the deportment and action required of him by the other, and that in ſuch a manner as to make the audidience believe the whole had been concerted. However, though the Italian players compoſe their own pieces, I queſtion whether it would be juſt to prefer them to thoſe illuſtrious actors, who indeed get their parts by heart, but like painters of genius, know how to hide art by art, and charm the ſpectators by the harmony of their voices, the truth of their geſtures, and the juſt flexibility of their tones; a certain graceful, eaſy, and natural air, with which

which they accompany all their motions, and a muſical harmony which they impart to every thing they pronounce.

To return to the Italian comedians, 'tis a great proof of their merit, that they have been received at Paris and in moſt of the conſiderable cities of Germany, though the pieces they repreſent are very trivial, and would be more properly entitled farces than comedies. The excellence of theſe performers in Lazzi's, by which they mean feats of addreſs, and ſtrokes of dexterity, is extraordinary; their action is ſo expreſſive, that even thoſe who have their faces covered, by the juſtneſs of their action characteriſe the part they play as well as actors who perform without a maſk.

The moſt celebrated Italian player upon record is a Sacramouche, who was particularly happy in one of the ſcenes of Colombine, Avocat pour et contre. Scaramouche who is Harlequin's Servant in this piece,

piece, enters his maſter's chamber, and after having ſet it in order, takes up his guitarre, ſeats himſelf in an elbow-chair, and plays a tune to amuſe himſelf till his maſter's return: Paſquariel comes behind him ſoftly and beats time upon his ſhoulders; which terrifies Scaramouche exceſſively.

It was in this ſcene that that famous player who was the ornament of the Theatre, and the model of the comedians of his age, who from him learned that art, as difficult as neceſſary, in perſons of their profeſſion; I mean the art of ſtirring the paſſions and painting them in an expreſſive manner upon the countenance, excelled in a remarkable manner: In it he has made the ſpectators laugh above a quarter of an hour together, by conſtantly varying his manner of expreſſing terror without ever uttering a ſingle word.

It was univerſally acknowledged, that the excellent actor above-mentioned poſſeſſed this talent in ſo high a degree of perfection, that he touched more hearts by the

ſimplicity of down-right nature than the moſt powerful orators could do by all the perſuaſive charms of Rhetoric. This gave occaſion to that expreſſion of a great prince who ſaw him play at Rome, Scaramuccia non parla, e dice gran coſe: Scaramouche ſays the fineſt things in the world without ever opening his lips.

The prince as a proof of his eſteem for him, as ſoon as the play was over, made him a preſent of the coach and ſix which he had ſent to bring him. He was always the delight of all the princes that knew him; and Lewis XIV. conferred numberleſs favours on him.

It was even thought that the Italian comedians of Paris would not have been diſmiſſed but for his death. The late Thomaſſin was ſo highly admired in the character of Harlequin, ſome years after, that (when he died) the Italian theatre was ſhut up for ſome months. It is remarkable in this eminent performer, that even in the ludi-

ludicrous character of Harlequin, he excelled in the pathetic, and could touch the tender paſſions in the moſt maſterly manner.

He was ſucceeded by Carlin Benazzi, a native of Turin, who, tho' he is thought inferior to Thomaſſin by thoſe who remember that excellent actor, has been long admired by all Paris for his excellent performance; careſſed by the nobility, on account of his wit and agreeable converſation, and ſo much a favourite of the king, that when he had (in a public manner) inſulted the prince of Monaco, who had reſented ſome liberties which he took with La Signora Coralina, a celebrated actreſs, whom the prince hadthen in keeping, his conduct was approved of at court, and the prince applied for redreſs in vain.

The Italian comedians have a peculiar talent for mimickry, which has always

made them highly ſucceſsful in their parodies, which are ſhort pieces of humour, whoſe intent is to burleſque and turn into ridicule every new tragedy that appears.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the French Players.

THE French, who have cultivated every uſeful and ornamental art with ſucceſs, have not neglected the art of acting. The two barons Mademoiſelle Chamelaye, Mademoiſelle la Couvreur, &c. have obtained a laſting reputation by acting in the pieces, by writing which Corneille and Racine immortalized their names. It is ſaid that Racine owed his ſucceſs in a great meaſure to Mademoiſelle Chamelaye's performance.

THIS celebrated actreſs (even to the cloſe of life, and in a very advanced age) was the admiration of all her auditors. 'Tis remarkable that France has in all ages produced more eminent actreſſes than actors, eſpecially in tragedy. Hence, the Abbé

Dubos, in his Reflections on Poetry, Painting, and Muſic, has inferred that women ſurpaſs men in the talents of declamation. Had the learned Abbé ſeen the Engliſh ſtage he would have altered his opinion, or inſtead of making the obſervation general would have confined it to France. All thoſe who know the French theatre will readily allow that the women players on it diſplay abilities ſo much ſuperior to thoſe of our Engliſh actreſſes, that it would be abſurd to compare them.

Whoever has ſeen Mademoiſelle Duſmenill play Athalie, Cleopatra, Leontine, Medea, Agrippina, and other parts of the ſame caſt, with La Guaſſin in Zara, Alzira, and other characters of tenderneſs, in which her performance whoſe chracteriſtick is ſoftneſs, has ſtill ſomething animated, whereby it produces a double effect upon the auditors, very different in this particular, from that of Mrs. C---r, whoſe execution, even in characters of paſſion, ſuch as Iſabella

Iſabella in the Fatal Marriage, is often ſo languid and unimpaſſioned that the moſt feeling ſpectator cannot eaſily be affected by it; or Mademoiſelle Clairon, who undoubtedly deſerves the preference to both the former, as ſhe unites the fire of the firſt with the tenderneſs of the latter, will, I make no doubt, acquieſce in this judgment.

In the tragedy of Dido, an excellent piece compoſed by Monſ. Le Franc, firſt preſident of the court of Aids of Montauban; the laſt mentioned actreſs is inimitable in expreſſing love and tenderneſs in the firſt acts of the piece, as well as rage; reſentment and deſpair in the latter. She utters the reproaches with which Dido loads Æneas when he diſcovers his deſign of quitting her with an emphaſis equal to that with which they are wrote. The paſſage is ſo fine that I believe every reader of taſte will excuſe me for citing it with the original paſſage of the Æneis from which it was

taken; and it is apprehended, that from a compariſon, the French author will be found to have improved upon the great Poet he has copied.

Non, tu n'es pas le ſang de heros, ni de dieux,
Aux milieu de Rochers tu recus la naiſſance
Un Monſtre de Forêts eleva ton Enfance,
Et tu n'as rien d'humain que l'Art trop dange-
reux,
De ſeduire une femme et de trahir ſez voeux.
Dis moi que t' appela de Bords de la Phrygie?
T'aij, attiré moimême du ſein de paurie?
Toi qui dans l'univers proſcrit, abandonné
Environné par tout d'ennmis et d'obſtacles
Serois encore ſans moi le jouet des oracles.
Les immortels jaloux du ſoin de ta grandeur
Menacent ton refus de leur courroux vengeur,
Ah! ſes preſages vains non trien qui m'epouvente
Il faut d'autres raiſons pour canvaincre une a-
mante,
Tranquilles dans les cieux, contens de nos hotels
Les dieux s'occupentils des amours de mortels!
Crains d'atteſter encorè leur Puiſſance ſuprême
Leur Foudre ne doit plus gronder que ſur toit-
même,

Mais

Mais tu ne connois pas leur auſtere equité
Tes Dieux ſont le parjure et l'infidelité.

Nec tibi diva parens, generis nec Dardanus auctor
Perfide, ſed duris genuit te cautibus horrens
Caucaſus Hyrcanæq; admorunt ubera tygres
Nam quid diſſimulo aut quæ me ad majora reſervo ?
Num fletu ingenuit noſtro? Num lumina flexit?
Num lachrymas victus dedit aut miſeratus amantem eſt ?
Quæ quibus anteferam? Jam jam nec maxima Juno
Nec Saturnius hæc oculis pater aſpicit æquis,
Nuſquam tuta fides. Ejectum littore, egentem
Accepi & regni demens in parte locavi,
Heu! furiis agitatus feror, nunc Augur Apollo
Nunc Lyſiæ ſortes nunc et Jove miſſus ab ipſo
Interpres divum fert horrida juſſa per auras,
Scilicet is ſuperis labor, ea cura quietos ſollicitat, &c.

THE paſſage we have juſt cited is rather an imitation than a tranſlation of this

paſſage of the Latin poet, and is ſuperior to it in ſome particulars. Who does not ſee how much thoſe two verſes,

Tranquilles dans les cieux, contens de nos autels,
Les dieux s'occupentils des amours de mortels!

Are ſuperior in ſtrength and emphaſis to

Scilicet is ſuperis labor, ea cura quietos ſollicitat.

THE imprecation of Dido againſt Æneas, which contains the moſt lively expreſſion of the violent emotions of a heart agitated by a complication of paſſions, is rendered with equal force in the tragedy of Monſieur le Franc, the two laſt lines are particularly emphatical.

Et puiſſent de leurs neveux les deniers ſucceſſeurs,
Sur les deniers Troyens être encore mes vengeurs.

Littera littoribus contraria, fluctibus undas
Imprecor, arma armis, pugnent ipſique nepoteſque. ÆNEID. IV.

LA

La Clairon utters this curſe with ſuch a fire and in ſuch a frantick agitation of paſſion, as would aſtoniſh any one who has been uſed to Engliſh actreſſes alone, whoſe weak execution is proportioned to their want of ſpirit and the feebleneſs of their powers.

Camilla, in Corneille's tragedy entitled Les Horaces, is played by the ſame actreſs, with a ſuperiority of genius, equal to that of the great author who wrote it. In that admirable ſoliloquy which follows the exhortation of old Horatius, who adviſes his daughter to bear the loſs of her lover with fortitude, and ſhew herſelf a Roman; ſhe acquits herſelf in a manner that never fails to tranſport the ſpectators. The ſpeech, which is a maſter-piece of eloquence, begins thus:

Ony, je vous ferai voir par d'invincibles marques
Qu'n veritable amour brave la main de Parques

Et ne prend point de Conſeils de ſes cruels tyrans,
Qu'n Aſtre injurieux nous donne pour Parens.

NOTHING can be more ſtriking than the variety of tranſlations, which ſhe makes from one agitation of paſſion to another in pronouncing this ſpeech. She is equally excellent in many other parts, as the Phædra of Racine, which was the firſt ſhe ever played; the Ariadne of Thomas Corneille, brother to the great Corneille; Æmiliot in Cinna, Agrippa in Britannicus, Queen Elizabeth in the Earl of Eſſex of Thomas Corneille; Rodogune in Peter Corneille's tragedy of that name, Pulcheria in Heraclius, and many others. When ſhe pronounces theſe lines in the laſt mentioned part,

Le plus vil eſclave qu'on puiſſe imaginer
Sera digne de moi ſi peut t' aſſaſſiner,

The audience never fails to expreſs their admiration by ſo loud and continued an applauſe,

plauſe, that ſhe is under a neceſſity of making a long pauſe, and even ſo a great part of the remainder of the ſpeech is frequently loſt. The French actreſſes, in my opinion, are by no means entitled to the ſame preference to ours, for their performance in comedy.

MADEMOISELLE DANGEVILLE, who has been always looked upon as their beſt performer in the characters of Waiting Women, is certainly equalled by Mrs. Clive; and Madame Granvalle, their chief actreſs in genteel comedy, was certainly much ſurpaſſed by Mrs. Woffington. We apprehend, that that opinion which has been ſo generally received, viz. That the French players are ſuperior to the Engliſh in comedy, but fall ſhort of them in tragedy, is one of thoſe vulgar errors which having been at firſt advanced at random, has ever ſince been believed implicitly. In general the men players in France are equal to ours in tragedy, and the women players vaſtly ſuperior to ours. In comedy our players

(whether men orwomen) do not yield to the French

THE moſt eminent tragedian in France is one Le Kain; he was bred a goldſmith, which buſineſs he quitted at twenty years of age for the ſtage, for which he had conceived a ſtrong inclination. It is univerſally known at Paris that he was inſtructed by Monſieur de Voltaire, who had himſelf a great talent for acting; and it is remarkable that he always outdoes himſelf in pieces of that author's compoſition. The characters he ſhines moſt in are Oroſmane in Zaire, Zamor in Alzire and Ædipus: He plays the Oreſtes of Racine incomparably, eſpecially the mad ſcene; but even here he does uot exert himſelf with the ſpirit which he diſcovers when he performs in the tragedies of Monſieur de Voltaire.

THIS excellent performer, though he is at once a fine ſpeaker, and touches all the paſſions in a very forcible and maſterly manner, muſt be allowed to be inferior to

Mr.

Mr. Garrick, though I believe every body that has a juſt taſte in acting would make no ſcruple to give him the preference to all our other tragedians, not excepting Barry.

Le Kain, however, labours under one great diſadvantage, his face (tho' it does not want expreſſion) is of an uncommon uglineſs; in ſtature he does not exceed the loweſt of the middle ſize, but his deportment is noble, and his geſtures extremely graceful and juſt: In dignity he muſt be allowed to ſurpaſs any player upon the Britiſh ſtage.

Sarrazin comes next in the liſt of tragic players; he was formerly a lawyer, but reduced by misfortunes to go upon the ſtage: He plays only old characters, ſuch as Luſignan in Zara, and though he is at leaſt ſeventy years of age, does not play the Old Man ſo well as Mr. Garrick did when but thirty. The firſt part he ever played was Agamemnon in the Iphigenia of Racinet, and this I take to be his maſter-piece.

THE moſt remarkable comedians of Paris are Granvalle for genteel comedy, chiefly for foppiſh characters, and Prezville for low and ludicrous parts. Whoever has ſeen him in the character of Criſpin in Le Legataire Univerſel, which is that of a footman, who is at once a compound of knavery and low humour, muſt allow him to be an admirable low comedian; yet Garrick's Abel Drugger far ſurpaſſes the Criſpin of Prezville.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of the Engliſh Players.

THE preſent ſubject has been ſo often treated that it is now become almoſt thread-bare; but as moſt of thoſe who have ſpoken of our eminent players, ſeem to have been influenced by partiality, and to have paſſed judgments, dictated tather by private views than ſuggeſted by true taſte and unbiaſſed reaſon, it is apprehended, that a few obſervations made by an author entirely free from prejudice, may prove not unacceptable to the public.

MR. GARRICK, who muſt be allowed to be the moſt univerſal theatrical genius in Europe, is without all diſpute, entitled to the firſt place amongſt both our tragic and comic players. In tragedy his declamation

mation is as juſt as harmonious, as his expreſſion of the paſſions is lively and exact. In comedy he always hits nature, and never over ſteps its modeſty, in order to gain the applauſe of the injudicious by buffoonry and extravagant ſallies of humour.

One perfection he has both in tragedy and comedy, which cannot, I think, be attributed to any of our players but himſelf; namely, that of delivering himſelf with the unconſtrained eaſe of an Italian player, and not ſeeming to utter a ſtudied part.

The face of this excellent performer, which has in it a great deal of the Italian character, is admirably calculated to expreſs the paſſions; and ſo well is his figure ſuited to every character he plays, that he would make an excellent picture in almoſt every part he performs, whether in tragedy or comedy.

As we propoſe only to give general characters of each of the capital performers, we ſhall not enlarge any further upon the merits

merits of this extraordinary genius, but conclude by obſerving that he enters with ſuch penetration into every ſentiment of Shakeſpear, and utters all his thoughts with an expreſſion of countenance and juſtneſs of tone that correſponds ſo well thereto, that he ſeems entitled to ſay (with regard to Shakeſpear) what Corregio ſaid with regard to Raphael, **ed io anco ſon pittore, I too am a painter.**

MR. BARRY muſt be allowed to be by all means the next tragedian to Mr. Garrick; but, to uſe the expreſſion of Virgil, he is Proximus ſed longo proximus intervallo.

This player generally enters into the ſpirit of his part, and touches the paſſions with ſufficient force, but all who are judges of ſpeaking will allow that his elocution is none of the beſt. He has been looked upon by many as the model of a theatrical lover, a merit which, I muſt own, I could never find in him. Whether this be owing

to

to his voice (which is extreamly harſh and diſagreeable) or to his having but an imperfect feeling of the paſſion of love, I ſhall not take upon me to determine; be that as it will, I take love to be the only paſſion that this player does not expreſs in a maſterly manner: He ſeems peculiarly happy in hitting the tone of terror and conſternation. Who can without ſhuddering hear him utter thoſe words in Othello juſt after he has committed the murder:

My wife, what wife! I have no wife!
Oh heavy hour!
Methinks it ſhould be now a huge eclipſe
Of ſun and moon, and that the affrighted world
Should yawn at alteration.

Mr. Barry's Romeo is defective only in point of tenderneſs, all the other paſſions in the character are very happily expreſſed by him; the violent emotions and deſpair expreſſed by him, upon his ſeparation from Juliet, could not be better rendered by any body but Mr. Garrick. I muſt own, I admire him in the Tomb-ſtone ſcene, and par-

particularly in his expoſtulation with the apothecary. His pleaſing in the characters of Lear, Hamlet, and Macbeth, which ſeem to require the genius of a Garrick, and to be ſuited to him alone, does not ſeem ſurpriſing, ſince our audiences have complaiſance enough, or want of taſte enough to bear with a much inferior player in almoſt all Mr. Garrick's capital parts. It will be eaſily perceived that I mean Moſſop, who by the courteſy of our Engliſh audiences has long been in poſſeſſion of playing the chief parts in tragedy, and that with a degree of applauſe which, whether merited or not, ſhews at leaſt the indulgence and nature of the ſpectators.

NATURE, 'tis true, has given Moſſop a face and perſon ſuited to moſt parts in tragedy, and a voice equally ſtrong and harmonious. But nature, which has been ſo prodigal to him in the accidental qualifications of a player, has refuſed him all thoſe eſſential ones which conſtitute the theatrical genius, tho' his features have a great deal of

natural

natural expreſſion and ſtrength, he has not the art to vary them according to the different paſſions of the part he acts. He is indeed a good picture, and reſembles a picture in always ſhewing the ſame face without any variety or alteration. We may juſtly apply to him the expreſſion of Hamlet, God has given him one face, but he cannot give himſelf another: Tho' his voice is, perhaps, as good as that of any player upon the ſtage, his elocution is execrable; he has not the art of giving variety to his tones, or flexibility to his modulation. In a word, his elocution is hardly good enough for a country curate; his deportment is as awkward and void of grace as his utterance is harſh and diſagreeable. To conclude his character, one would be almoſt tempted to think that Shakeſpear propheſied of him in that emphatical exclamation in the tragedy of Hamlet, Oh it offends me to the ſoul to ſee a robuſtuous perriwig-pated fellow tearing a paſſion to rags, to very tatters, to ſplit the ears of the groundlings, who for the moſt part are incapable of every thing

but

but inexplicable dumb ſhew and noiſe. In fine, though this player has been praiſed highly, not to ſpeak it prophanely, our opinion of him is, that having neither the accent of a Chriſtian nor the gait of Chriſtian, Pagan or man, he ſo ſtruts and bellows, that one would think that ſome journeyman of nature had made him, and made him ill too, he imitates humanity ſo abominably.

It has always been a matter of ſurprize to me that Holland ſhould be in leſs favour with the town than Moſſop. He is certainly ſuperior to him in elocution and deportment, and thoſe that have ſeen Moſſop and him in the character of Hamlet, will, I believe, upon comparing them readily allow that Holland is as much ſuperior to Moſſop in that part as Garrick is to Holland.

I have already ſpoken my ſentiments with regard to our Engliſh actreſſes in tragedy; in comedy indeed, ſome of them acquit themſelves perfectly well. With regard

to

to players in comedy, our Engliſh ſtage may rival any theatre in Europe. Not to mention Mr. Garrick, whoſe merit both in tragedy and comedy is out of diſpute, we may challenge all France to produce a comedian that plays with more eaſe and truth than Mr. Woodward. In genteel comedy Mr. Palmer equals, or rather ſurpaſſes Bellecour the favourite of Paris.

Mr. Shuter poſſeſſes the vis comica in a degree that has juſtly obtained him the unanimous ſuffrages of all perſons of taſte. In vain has malevolence attempted to decry him as a buffoon, that drops the comedian to be laughed at as a comical man; he will always be allowed by every judicious ſpectator to be a humorous, but juſt copyer of nature.

The town ſeems never to have done juſtice to the merit of Mr. Arthur in comedy, though no player ever entered more thoroughly into the ſpirit of his parts. In the

the character of Shylock, one of the moſt ſtriking and picturiſque ever drawn by Shakeſpear, his performance was not much inferior to that of Mr. Macklin. Mr. Yates is a very univerſal player, and though he appears in a variety of different characters, always acquits himſelf to the ſatisfaction of his audience. His having ſu[illegible]ſſed Mr. Garrick in performing the part of the Lying Valet, is a circumſtance that would alone entitle him to a diſtinguiſhed place amongſt the moſt eminent comedians.

Mr. Foote, to whoſe merit as an author we have done juſtice above, muſt be allowed to have conſiderable talents for acting likewiſe. His performance of the character of Bayes always appeared to me, at leaſt equal to Mr. Garrick's.

In the characters of Fondlewife and Sir Paul Plyant, he is orignal: Such characters are generally over-done by moſt players; Mr. Macklin, who, however, had conſiderable abilities for this caſt of acting, was not

free from this defect. Mr. Foote, on the other hand, copies nature with the utmoſt exactneſs, and yet never fails to excite the mirth of his audience in the moſt powerful manner. In one talent, and that a very pleaſing one, Mr. Foote excells all the performers of the age, I mean in mimickry.

Mr. Berry is an actor of ſome merit in comedy, but his performance in tragedy is very indifferent: In the characters of Sir Epicure Mammon, Boniface, Serjeant Kite, Caliban, and many others, he hits the true ſpirit of comedy, and never loſes ſight of nature.

Mr. Blakes is reckoned a good mimick of a Frenchman, but we apprehend that it is by ſuch as have not been much converſant amongſt Frenchmen; thus, I have ſeen Droin loudly applauded at Paris for mimicking an Engliſhman, in le Francois a Londres, tho' his accent and deportment were as like thoſe of a Chineſe as that of an Engliſhman.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The CONCLUSION.

IN the former part of this Treatiſe I have laid before the reader ſuch laws of the ſtage, as appeared to me of the higheſt importance; this I apprehend to be neceſſary, as dramatic Poetry does not at preſent ſeem to be well underſtood. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that rules can never impart a genius to thoſe who have not received one from nature, and that thoſe who have can ſeldom ſubmit to ſuch a conſtraint. Corneille, the only true dramatic genius that France can boaſt, is in many reſpects, as incorrect as Shakeſpear.

IT has been found neceſſary to retrench almoſt a third part of the cid in the action, and the part of Livia in Cinna is conſtantly left out likewiſe, being entirely ſuperfluous and a blemiſh to the piece. It may, there-

fore, juſtly be aſked what is the uſe of rules? Their chief uſe, in my apprehenſion, is to lead men of a ſedate and philoſophical turn of mind, to the ſource of the ſublime and beautiful, and thereby enable them to make approaches to that perfection which they could never hit, by the unaſſiſted force of their natural genius.

In the latter part of this work I have ſpoken of the performers of foreign countries and our own, and have all along made it my endeavour to avoid that partiality which is generally too conſpicuous in theatrical diſſertations: How my opinions may be received I know not, but I can aſſure the Public, that they were not ſuggeſted by any private motives, either of friendſhip or ill-will, but the genuine dictates of an unbiaſſed and impartial judgment.

FINIS.